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No. 5

House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. BLACK).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 12, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DIANE BLACK to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2015, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

REMEMBERING STANLEY ISRAELITE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, today, I rise to remember one of eastern Connecticut's most generous, caring, and devoted citizens, Stanley Israelite.

Stanley passed away this past December at age 89 and leaves behind an enduring powerful legacy in his native Norwich and throughout Connecticut. I ask the U.S. House to join me in ex-

pressing condolences to his wife, Linda Hershman; and his four children, Michael Israelite, Abby Dolliver, Mindy Wilkie, and Jon Israelite.

After his passing, a memorial service was held at Beth Jacob Synagogue, which was the scene of an overflow crowd of people from all walks of life. His longtime boss, former U.S. Senator Chris Dodd; Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman; State legislators; mayors and former mayors; small business owners; labor union leaders; and his neighbors and friends from the city he loved, Norwich, Connecticut, were all in attendance.

Senator Dodd delivered a stirring eulogy filled with humor and passion, describing Stanley's amazing life of service. As Senator Dodd related, Stanley dedicated his life to helping others.

After starting his career in his family-owned jewelry store, he uncovered his true passion, assisting members of his community with any problem, anytime, after intervening with a family in crisis. He left the business, and after holding a variety of human service and business advocacy positions in Norwich—and earning citizen of the year and citizen of the decade awards in the 1960s—went on to work for Chris Dodd.

Stanley ran his constituent service programs, beginning in 1974 with Dodd's election as Second District Congressman, the seat that I now have the honor to hold, and later as State director to Senator Dodd after Chris' election to the Senate in 1980.

Stanley remained a fixture in Connecticut politics, known for his consummate dedication to helping constituents get the help they needed. He spent decades ensuring that Connecticut citizens received help from the VA, Medicare, and Social Security; solved thorny immigration problems; helped small business owners get their feet under them; and then doggedly pushed forward projects to improve local communities.

Today, one of the projects he spearheaded, an industrial park in Norwich that never would have been realized without Stanley's efforts, now bears his name, the Stanley Israelite Norwich Business Park, renamed in his honor in 2005. In 1995, Stanley was recognized as U.S. News and World Report's 12 Indispensable Americans.

For all the awards and honors that his community rightly bestowed on him throughout his career, Stanley, himself, valued the thank you notes that he received from grateful constituents above everything. In 1995, he explained to a reporter from The New London Day that the highest honor in the Dodd office was to post a constituent thank you letter on the office refrigerator. "That is our glory," he said. "If you are on the refrigerator, then you have done a good job."

Stanley's personal mantra—which he instilled in his colleagues, friends, and family—was always, "Don't forget the people." After a lifetime of service to his community, the people he helped and everyone who had the privilege to know him will certainly never forget him.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION LEGISLATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BYRNE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BYRNE. Madam Speaker, just last month, we made a promise to the American people. We promised our constituents that we would fight the Obama administration's decision to give executive amnesty to many of those in this country illegally.

I am pleased to announce that this week the House will fulfill that promise and act to defund the illegal executive action. All last year, we strongly urged the President not to act alone, and the American people spoke clearly in last November's election, but the President forged ahead anyway.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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Now, in order to preserve our Nation's longstanding system of checks and balances to preserve the very order of our Constitution, the House will act to rein in President Obama's plans for executive amnesty.

We will vote on legislation, which I was proud to cosponsor, written by my Alabama colleague, Congressman ROBERT ADERHOLT, which would prevent the President from carrying out his plans for executive amnesty.

Let me be clear: this is tough legislation which completely eliminates all funds for implementation of the President's illegal actions. The bill has the support of many leading voices in the immigration debate including my home State Senator, JEFF SESSIONS.

Just as important, the legislation makes clear that no Federal benefits can be granted to any alien as a result of the policies defunded and also eliminates funds to consider new, renewal, or previously-denied applications for executive amnesty.

The legislation doesn't just defund the President's executive action. The legislation paves the way for stronger border security by increasing funds for border agents, detention beds, and enforcement activities.

In order to halt illegal immigration in this country, we must stop encouraging illegal immigration by offering amnesty and instead put more attention on actually securing our borders.

I wish this legislation wasn't necessary. I wish President Obama had listened to the American people and enforced our current laws instead of continuing his my-way-or-the-highway style of governing; instead, he moved ahead with action that clearly violates our Constitution and has poisoned the well for serious conversation on immigration reform.

Madam Speaker, I must ask a simple question that has very serious consequences: When will it stop? When will President Obama stop issuing short-sighted executive action and instead work together with this Congress to find long-term solutions to the real issues plaguing our country?

I fear that the answer to that question is not promising, given that while we were on this floor taking our oath of office, the White House was busy issuing veto threats.

I understand that the legislative process may not be convenient for the President, but the process exists for a reason. The Congress makes the laws, and the President should enforce them. This President just doesn't get that.

This week, the House will act to rein in the President once again. We will attempt to right the scales of power and restore our constitutional system of checks and balances.

We cannot and we will not sit back idly and allow the President to act alone. We promised the American people we would respond, and this week, we will hold true to our word.

CELEBRATING THE SAN ANTONIO SPURS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DOGGETT. Madam Speaker, today is a special day for San Antonio because our San Antonio Spurs are being recognized at the White House for their victorious season. We have, of course, already had many a celebration in San Antonio, but it is good to see this celebration now reaching 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. Congratulations to the San Antonio Spurs on this fifth amazing championship ring.

Serving here in Congress as a representative for much of San Antonio, including the very place in the Alamo City where the Spurs have scored so many of these victories, I know that nothing defines the Spurs or San Antonio like the teamwork, the determination, and the positive attitude they displayed on this trail to the 2014 championship victory. These values are shown through the Spurs' "Silver and Black Give Back"; a community and outreach program which has benefited over 250,000 children and coaches in the past couple of decades, all this in a city that is overflowing with Spurs enthusiasm and Spurs fans.

I would have to say that all of San Antonio knows that the Spurs are certainly no Mavericks at basketball; they are well-seasoned, team players. They were able to rain down Thunder on all of their 2014 opponents with a regular season record of 62 wins out of 82 games. And that is not all that set the Spurs apart; they are true Trailblazers, hiring the first female assistant coach in the NBA, Becky Hammon. Overall, when it came down to that fifth ring, the Spurs, a team that lives in our Texas temperatures, were able to beat the Heat with a cool 4-1 series blowout.

Like San Antonio itself, the Spurs have attracted the best and brightest from all over the world. There never has been, and there never will be, a team quite like the San Antonio Spurs in a city that is like no other.

Congratulations to a dynasty. Like so many of my constituents, I am ready for the "Race for Seis!"

THE FRENCH FIGHT BACK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, around 11 a.m. on January 7, on a cold winter day in Paris, France, two men armed with AK-47s forced a woman entering the offices of a French newspaper to let them in.

After murdering the security guard in the lobby, they ran up to the second floor and shouted, "Where is Charb? Where is Charb?" Charb is the nickname for the newspaper's editor, Mr. Charbonnier.

Over the next 5 minutes, the two men would seek out and execute Mr.

Charbonnier and 10 other people in the newspaper. They left the building, shouting the Islamic phrase, "Allah Akbar" or "God is the greatest." They then murdered a policeman, ran back to their car, shouting, "We have avenged the Prophet Muhammad."

You see, Madam Speaker, these killers murdered because the paper exercised the human right of free speech and a free press. The assassin brothers were on the run for 2 days, but on January 9, the police cornered them at a standoff near the Paris airport. The police rescued a hostage, and the brothers were killed, going out just like they wanted to, in a massive firefight as martyrs.

On the same day, another gunman, but an accomplice of the two brothers, took hostages at a kosher grocery store on the east side of Paris. Police stormed the grocery store and killed the terrorist, but not before he had murdered Jewish hostages.

You see, Madam Speaker, these three killed because people disagreed with them. They killed the Jews because they were Jews. They killed the people at the newspaper because they had the audacity to print things that these folks—these terrorists—did not approve of.

The French authorities did a superb job hunting down and killing these terrorists. The two brothers responsible for the initial attack have a history of terrorist activities. One brother said he even dreamed of killing Jews in France.

Hours before one of them met his Maker, they called a French TV station, saying, "We are telling you that we are defenders of the Prophet—peace and blessings be upon him—and that I was sent by al Qaeda in Yemen and that I went there, and it is the imam al-Awlaki that financed me."

Yes, Madam Speaker, we have heard this before, young people traveling overseas where they meet radical Islamic jihadists who preach hate and murder in the name of religion.

□ 1215

They are indoctrinated and infected with the cancer of radical Islam and sent back to their home country to inflict terror and kill men, women, and children. They kill in the name of their radical religious beliefs.

We are even seeing this in the United States. Groups like ISIS are encouraging Americans to join their reign of terror. Americans who travel overseas to fight with ISIS are not coming back home to America to open coffee shops. They are coming back to do mischief and kill us.

That is why I have introduced and reintroduced the FTO Passport Revocation Act that would authorize the revocation or denial of passports to individuals affiliated with foreign terrorist organizations. The Benedict Arnold traitors who turn against America and join the ranks of foreign radical terrorist organizations should lose their

rights. This bill will help law enforcement locate these individuals by preventing them from traveling internationally so they can be captured and brought to justice. Most importantly, this legislation will prevent traitor Americans from entering the United States undetected.

Madam Speaker, the French people held a solidarity rally in honor of the murdered. It was also a statement of freedom. Some estimated over 2 million attended the rally in Paris. Marching arm in arm with French President Hollande were 40 world leaders, including German Chancellor Merkel, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, and Palestinian President Abbas.

Unfortunately, the United States President, the Vice President, and the Secretary of State did not choose to show up and support this solidarity meeting. That is unfortunate. The French are a close ally and our oldest ally. We have a portrait of the great Frenchman Lafayette in this very Chamber across the way from George Washington.

Freedom is under attack by these terrorists. They are a threat to civilization, order, and liberty. The United States should be more outspoken in our support for the French people and our opposition to terror. We should support our allies like the French and mourn when they mourn and be resolved to track terrorists down anywhere in the world where they are. They are at war with us, Madam Speaker.

The French Prime Minister said it best:

We are fighting a war, not a war against religion, not a war of civilizations, but to defend our values, which are universal. It is a war against terrorism and radical Islam, against everything that aims to shatter solidarity, liberty, and brotherhood.

And that is just the way it is.

CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL BOONDOGGLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, today I once again will speak about California's high-speed rail system.

Now, just this last week, they had a symbolic groundbreaking for this system in the context of getting started. California has been, since 2008, anticipating the start of high-speed rail. What do we have instead? Empty promises, a lot of waste, and a lot of money going down the tubes.

What we see is that when the plan was first put in place, the voters of California approved a \$33 billion link from Los Angeles to San Francisco. What they are now being given is something that has tripled in price. What they have now been given at this groundbreaking, which is symbolic, what you saw was a mound of dirt with about an 8-foot section of ties and rails

on that. That is very symbolic for those doing the groundbreaking, but also for those of us that will be paying for it.

What this high-speed rail system will turn into is several links of rail between north and south California that aren't linked up, that have no way to power them, and no trains will be running on them for several years.

So instead of the \$33 billion plan that they saw on the ballot in 2008—which, by the way, it was on the 2006 ballot and, before that, on the 2004 ballot, but those involved knew that they would have, politically, a hard time selling that to people in California—it has ballooned to a \$100-billion plan until they revise it again downwards by taking away part of the high-speed system in San Francisco and L.A., where they will instead be using local transit to link to the center section that runs through central California.

That is not even legal under Prop 1A. What Prop 1A spells out is that it has to be a high-speed system that will make it from San Francisco to L.A. or reverse in 2½ hours at speeds of 220 miles per hour. This promise will not be upheld.

Now, why is this important to a national audience, to Members of Congress, and to people in other States? It is because, after the stimulus package was passed in 2009–2010, some of that Federal money is going to go for the high-speed rail system in California. Indeed, several other States were recipients of those initial grants. After they looked at their own ideas for high-speed rail and saw the costs involved and the infeasibility, they turned that money back into that pot of money. California, of course, stepped forward and said: Hey, give us all of that money. So they have received, at this point, about \$3.5 billion that they can spend, dollar for dollar, for the bond money they spend themselves, the State money.

So what that means for Americans is that we know Californians will be back at the Federal well once again trying to get more money for their high-speed plan. What we see is that their downsized plan will still cost \$68 billion. They only have identified \$13 billion for the whole system. No private sector money—which is what we were told when the ballot measure passed—has stepped forward to be part of this. The plan is \$55 billion short. The Federal Government, so far, has offered about 3½. Did they think they would get the other 52 from the Federal Government since no private sector money wants to come forward for this? Will they get it out of the California taxpayers? Nobody knows.

Indeed, the Governor, at the groundbreaking the other day, said: Don't worry about the money; we will get it. Well, part of their measure has been to impose a cap-and-trade program on the people of California which so far has generated about \$250 million per year. At that rate, it will be how

many centuries before they can catch up and get enough money just to pay for high-speed rail which cap-and-trade wasn't even intended for anyway?

Folks, we have a giant problem here. High-speed rail in California should not be the Federal taxpayers' burden. It shouldn't even be the people of California's burden. They barely passed it by 52–48 percent on that 2008 ballot after two previous ballot delays. Delay, delay, delay is what you see with this system.

So what really needs to happen is the people of California need to step forward, put this back on the ballot, and have a vote once again on this. And the Federal Government doesn't need to be giving signals that they are going to send even more money for this boondoggle which has been failed, flawed, and deceptive since day one.

Madam Speaker, it is a massively flawed project that leaves taxpayers at all levels on the hook for many, many years to come for something that may not even run in our lifetime. So we, as Federal legislators, need to put a stop to any idea—as my colleagues have been doing—for more money to go forward for high-speed rail. And we need the people of California to wake up to that idea and demand that it be placed back on the ballot, this money go instead for other projects that could be helpful for their transportation corridors, for their highway system, and for the normal mode of rail which can be made to be enhanced to drive 125 miles per hour, which would be beneficial.

Madam Speaker, we need to get on the ball and get back to reality on what high-speed rail will really cost Californians and the American taxpayer and urge that it be placed back on the ballot and give the people that choice once again.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 22 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of New York) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Dear God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

As a parent encourages a child or a mentor calls forth the hidden potential of an intern, Lord, our God, may You bless all who work as the 114th Congress, especially new Members.

Remove fear and confusion, wipe away distrust, which only inhibit good judgment and leadership. Strengthen the resolve and compassion of all Members, that they may serve Your people with renewed clarity of vision and refined purpose that will soon unify this Nation in self-discipline and confidence, for You reward the just and their deeds.

Bless all Members this day, O God, and be with them and with us all in every day to come. May all that is done be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. ASHFORD. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. ASHFORD. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from New York (Mr. ISRAEL) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. ISRAEL led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

IMMIGRATION

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, as the granddaughter of Italian immigrants, I am thankful America has always opened her arms to people looking to build a better way for themselves and their families. However, breaking the law to enter the United States should not be rewarded.

Well, that is exactly what President Obama is doing by granting amnesty to millions of illegal aliens through executive actions. President Obama does not have the legal authority to legislate, and his unilateral actions on immigration are a blatant overreach of his constitutionally-granted executive authority.

It is also wrong to short-circuit the American immigration process in this

manner when there are so many individuals who have waited years for the opportunity to come to this country the right way.

This week, the House will take action to defund President Obama's unconstitutional executive actions on immigration. It is the responsibility of Congress to pursue reforms and ensure a strong immigration policy is arrived at through consensus, and we should begin by securing our borders.

DO NOT HOLD THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY HOSTAGE TO A POLITICAL AGENDA

(Mr. ISRAEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, the tragedy in France has put us all on notice that the threat of terror is strong and we must be prepared. We need to ensure that the Department of Homeland Security is ready, willing, and able to detect and stop what happened in France from happening here.

Shockingly, this week, Republicans, rather than taking steps to strengthen the DHS, will take steps to actually weaken it. They will do so by holding the Department hostage to their politics on immigration.

They will offer five amendments to politicize the DHS at a time when we need it to be its professional best. They have placed their ideological agenda ahead of paychecks. Now, they are placing their ideological agenda ahead of our protection.

Mr. Speaker, if they want to pass an immigration bill, pass one. If they want to politicize issues, do it on another issue, but not the Department of Homeland Security. Do not jeopardize the safety of the American people with a political stunt and not this week, after terrorists murdered innocent civilians in France. Do not hold the DHS hostage to a political agenda.

They are saying that this is a political compromise. I understand political compromise, but the homeland security of my constituents and the American people should never be the subject of a political compromise.

THE KEYSTONE PIPELINE

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, a majority of Americans support building the Keystone pipeline to create jobs and strengthen our energy independence; yet President Obama threatens to block this critical project. The most environmentally secure means to transport oil is by pipeline.

This pipeline means hundreds of permanent jobs in South Carolina's Second Congressional District, where companies like Michelin Tire Corporation in Lexington and MTU America in

Graniteville produce the earthmover tires and engines used for Canadian oil sand development; also, the Colonial pipeline to North Augusta reduces gas prices for consumers locally.

Last week, in a bipartisan vote, the House passed a bill to approve the Keystone pipeline. I hope the President will support the priorities of the American people rather than cater to a generous campaign donor.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and the President, by his actions, must never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Our sympathy to America's first ally, France, over the terrorist attacks last week. Our solidarity with France is clear with the portrait of the Marquis de Lafayette gratefully placed in the House Chamber as one of only two portraits in this room.

NEBRASKA'S INDEPENDENT TRADITION OF GOVERNING

(Mr. ASHFORD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ASHFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about Nebraska's independent tradition of governing. In Nebraska, we do things a little differently. We have the only nonpartisan unicameral legislature in the Nation, a body that I proudly served in for 16 years, as did my good friends Senator DEB FISCHER and Congressman ADRIAN SMITH.

In Lincoln, legislators are not bound by political parties but by the needs of their constituents; rather than provide partisan sound bites, members of the unicameral provide solutions forged through compromise and collaboration.

We need more of this tradition in Washington, and I hope to bring Nebraska common sense to this body. We need to find more ways to come together and solve our Nation's problems. The American people do not want dogged partisanship. They want us to work together to get real results that help make their everyday lives better.

I have pledged to be an independent, pragmatic voice for my constituents to responsibly tackle the difficult issues facing our country and to do so in a bipartisan manner. I hope that my colleagues will follow Nebraska's example.

HONORING COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY—PUEBLO'S NATIONAL CHAMPION THUNDERWOLVES

(Mr. TIPTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Colorado State University—Pueblo ThunderWolves men's football team and their coach, John Wristen. In their trip to the NCAA Division II National Finals this year, the ThunderWolves claimed their first national football championship in school history.

The ThunderWolves squared off against Minnesota State, who were undefeated for the season. With grit and a stout defense, the Wolf Pack shut out the Mavericks by a score of 13-0.

Before the season began, Coach Wristen gave each player a shirt with the letters W-T-L-G, which meant "Win the Last Game." Coach Wristen's dream, when he became head coach of the ThunderWolves 7 years ago, was to win a national championship. Now, the Wolf Pack players and coaches can proudly say they are national champions. The city of Pueblo is proud of the team.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the team and their outstanding coach, John Wristen, for the stellar season and championship. With Coach Wristen's leadership and the team's tireless commitment to winning, they captured their first football championship and are solidifying the ThunderWolves program's legacy of excellence.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS

(Ms. McCOLLUM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, after last week's horrific attacks in France, we are reminded that the threat of terrorism is very real. The Department of Homeland Security is on the front line of protecting our Nation from terrorist threats.

House Republicans are using the funding for DHS for political posturing rather than governing. The President has prioritized on how our national security dollars are spent. He focused DHS' tools and resources on preventing terrorist threats and protecting the American people.

Republicans continue to play political games with immigration reform, and now, they are bringing forward a series of amendments to pick a fight with the President. The political games that the Republicans are playing with this bill would jeopardize our national security. We need an appropriations bill that ensures that DHS has the resources and tools they need to protect America.

We must pass a strong bipartisan Homeland Security Appropriations bill that keeps America safe and protects our country.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS

(Ms. SCHAKOWSKY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, Americans watching this debate must be shaking their heads in astonishment. The question on everyone's mind at this moment is: Are we doing everything we can to prevent a Paris-like terrorist attack in the United States?

Americans would be right to suppose the Republican majority is rushing to

finally adequately fund the Department of Homeland Security after they already delayed funding by making it a political football on immigration; but, no, it seems the Republicans can't help themselves, even when it comes to national security.

They can't simply vote for the necessary funding to keep the American people safe; instead, the Republicans view this potentially dangerous moment as an opportunity to undermine the President's executive actions on immigration going all the way back to 2011, putting 600,000 young people in jeopardy of deportation and refusing to let the government prioritize for deportation felons over families.

Shame on them. We should stop playing games with our national security by defeating these amendments and passing a clean Homeland Security funding bill.

LET'S NOT PLAY POLITICS WITH HOMELAND SECURITY

(Mr. POLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Homeland Security is about keeping our Nation and our citizens safe.

Just as we fund the military to face threats abroad, Department of Homeland Security does that work to keep our communities safe at home. Now is not the time to play politics with our immigration laws as if it is a child's toy. If you want to talk immigration, let's talk immigration.

We have a plan. The Senate passed a bipartisan plan with more than two-thirds support last session. Let's see some ideas about resolving our broken immigration system.

The President's step is an important first step to keep our communities safer, by focusing our limited enforcement resources on criminals who represent a threat to our community.

Do you want to undo that and instead use our enforcement resources to go after kids and families rather than criminals? That makes our communities less safe rather than more.

Let's not play politics with Homeland Security. Pass a clean bill, and tackle the immigration issue.

THE HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING BILL

(Mr. BEYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to raise my concerns about the upcoming Homeland Security funding bill.

The tragedies in Paris reinforce how critical it is that we keep DHS strong and appropriately financed. Unfortunately, the majority leadership has decided to play politics with our national

security. The appropriations package is littered with amendments which would undermine what little progress we have made to our broken immigration system.

Our family business just lost one of our most valuable employees, Cesar Arias. He may have originally come to Virginia without proper papers, but in the Reagan years, he found a way to stay here, raise his family, and open and close our store 6 days a week for more than 20 years. Cesar is one small, powerful example among millions of new Americans who have helped our economy grow and kept our democracy strong. He believed it was long past time for comprehensive immigration reform.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the Republicans to bring a clean bill to the floor without the anti-immigrant amendments. We need to invest in homeland security, and we need a real conversation about immigration reform.

THE HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING BILL

(Ms. EDWARDS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because we are just 1 week into this Congress and the Republican majority promised bipartisanship, especially on homeland security, the security of our homeland, yet, oh, no, it is politics as usual from Republicans now politicizing the Department of Homeland Security and its important funding at this time when we know around the world, and especially in France, which has felt so poignantly what happens when we don't pay attention to security. But here they are.

They are mad at the President. Why? Because the President did what other Presidents have done, taking executive action on immigration. And so they are mad at the President, and Republicans are now going to punish the American people by not protecting our homeland. Well, shame on the Republican Party for politicizing the Department of Homeland Security.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to get to business. The American people expect that, and the Republicans, if they plan to govern, need to do it and pass a clean bill funding our Department of Homeland Security and take care of our homeland. This is what the American people expect, and it is what the Republican Party needs to deliver if they want to govern.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 5 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 16 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1706

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BYRNE) at 5 o'clock and 6 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

CLAY HUNT SUICIDE PREVENTION
FOR AMERICAN VETERANS ACT

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 203) to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide for the conduct of annual evaluations of mental health care and suicide prevention programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to require a pilot program on loan repayment for psychiatrists who agree to serve in the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 203

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act" or the "Clay Hunt SAV Act".

SEC. 2. EVALUATIONS OF MENTAL HEALTH CARE
AND SUICIDE PREVENTION PRO-
GRAMS OF DEPARTMENT OF VET-
ERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) EVALUATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"§1709B. Evaluations of mental health care
and suicide prevention programs

"(a) EVALUATIONS.—(1) Not less frequently than once during each period specified in paragraph (3), the Secretary shall provide for the conduct of an evaluation of the mental health care and suicide prevention programs carried out under the laws administered by the Secretary.

"(2) Each evaluation conducted under paragraph (1) shall—

"(A) use metrics that are common among and useful for practitioners in the field of mental health care and suicide prevention;

"(B) identify the most effective mental health care and suicide prevention programs conducted by the Secretary, including such programs conducted at a Center of Excellence;

"(C) identify the cost-effectiveness of each program identified under subparagraph (B);

"(D) measure the satisfaction of patients with respect to the care provided under each such program; and

"(E) propose best practices for caring for individuals who suffer from mental health

disorders or are at risk of suicide, including such practices conducted or suggested by other departments or agencies of the Federal Government, including the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services.

"(3) The periods specified in this paragraph are the following:

"(A) The period beginning on the date on which the Secretary awards the contract under paragraph (4) and ending on September 30, 2018.

"(B) Each fiscal year beginning on or after October 1, 2018.

"(4) Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary shall seek to enter into a contract with an independent third party unaffiliated with the Department of Veterans Affairs to conduct evaluations under paragraph (1).

"(5) The independent third party that is awarded the contract under paragraph (4) shall submit to the Secretary each evaluation conducted under paragraph (1).

"(b) ANNUAL SUBMISSION.—Not later than December 1, 2018, and each year thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report that contains the following:

"(1) The most recent evaluations submitted to the Secretary under subsection (a)(5) that the Secretary has not previously submitted to such Committees.

"(2) Any recommendations the Secretary considers appropriate."

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1709A the following new item:

"1709B. Evaluations of mental health care and suicide prevention programs."

(b) INTERIM REPORTS.—Not later than September 30 of each of 2016 and 2017, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in coordination with the independent third party awarded a contract by the Secretary pursuant to section 1709B(a)(4) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a)(1), shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the mental health care and suicide prevention programs carried out under the laws administered by the Secretary that includes, with respect to each such program, the following:

(1) A description of the program.

(2) The number of veterans served by the program.

(3) The budget of the program.

(4) The number of full-time equivalent employees assigned to the program.

(5) Whether veterans may repeat participation in the program or participate in the program in addition to other similar programs.

(6) Any study results or research published regarding the efficacy of the program.

(7) Any other information the Secretary determines appropriate.

SEC. 3. PUBLICATION OF INTERNET WEBSITE TO
PROVIDE INFORMATION REGARDING
MENTAL HEALTH CARE SERVICES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Using funds made available to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to publish the Internet websites of the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary shall survey the existing Internet websites and information resources of the Department to publish an Internet website that serves as a centralized source to provide veterans with information regarding all of the mental health care services provided by the Secretary.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The Internet website published under subsection (a) shall provide to veterans information regarding all of the mental health care services available in the Veteran Integrated Service Network that the veteran is seeking such services, including, with respect to each medical center, Vet Center (as defined in section 1712A of title 38, United States Code), and community-based outpatient center in the Veterans Integrated Service Network—

(1) the name and contact information of each social work office;

(2) the name and contact information of each mental health clinic;

(3) a list of appropriate staff; and

(4) any other information the Secretary determines appropriate.

(c) UPDATED INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall ensure that the information described in subsection (b) that is published on the Internet website under subsection (a) is updated not less than once every 90 days.

(d) OUTREACH.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall ensure that the outreach conducted under section 1720F(i) of title 38, United States Code, includes information regarding the Internet website published under subsection (a).

SEC. 4. PILOT PROGRAM FOR REPAYMENT OF
EDUCATIONAL LOANS FOR CERTAIN
PSYCHIATRISTS OF VETERANS
HEALTH ADMINISTRATION.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a pilot program to repay loans of individuals described in subsection (b) that—

(1) were used by such individuals to finance education relating to psychiatric medicine, including education leading to—

(A) a degree of doctor of medicine; or

(B) a degree of doctor of osteopathy; and

(2) were obtained from any of the following:

(A) A governmental entity.

(B) A private financial institution.

(C) A school.

(D) Any other authorized entity as determined by the Secretary.

(b) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), an individual eligible for participation in the pilot program is an individual who—

(A) either—

(i) is licensed or eligible for licensure to practice psychiatric medicine in the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs; or

(ii) is enrolled in the final year of a residency program leading to a specialty qualification in psychiatric medicine that is approved by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education; and

(B) demonstrates a commitment to a long-term career as a psychiatrist in the Veterans Health Administration, as determined by the Secretary.

(2) PROHIBITION ON SIMULTANEOUS ELIGIBILITY.—An individual who is participating in any other program of the Federal Government that repays the educational loans of the individual is not eligible to participate in the pilot program.

(c) SELECTION.—The Secretary shall select not less than 10 individuals described in subsection (b) to participate in the pilot program for each year in which the Secretary carries out the pilot program.

(d) PERIOD OF OBLIGATED SERVICE.—The Secretary shall enter into an agreement with each individual selected under subsection (c) in which such individual agrees to serve a period of 2 or more years of obligated service for the Veterans Health Administration in the field of psychiatric medicine, as determined by the Secretary.

(e) LOAN REPAYMENTS.—

(1) AMOUNTS.—Subject to paragraph (2), a loan repayment under this section may consist of payment of the principal, interest, and related expenses of a loan obtained by an individual who is participating in the pilot program for all educational expenses (including tuition, fees, books, and laboratory expenses) of such individual relating to education described in subsection (a)(1).

(2) LIMIT.—For each year of obligated service that an individual who is participating in the pilot program agrees to serve under subsection (d), the Secretary may pay not more than \$30,000 in loan repayment on behalf of such individual.

(f) BREACH.—

(1) LIABILITY.—An individual who participates in the pilot program and fails to satisfy the period of obligated service under subsection (d) shall be liable to the United States, in lieu of such obligated service, for the amount that has been paid or is payable to or on behalf of the individual under the pilot program, reduced by the proportion that the number of days served for completion of the period of obligated service bears to the total number of days in the period of obligated service of such individual.

(2) REPAYMENT PERIOD.—Any amount of damages that the United States is entitled to recover under this subsection shall be paid to the United States not later than 1 year after the date of the breach of the agreement.

(g) REPORT.—

(1) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date on which the pilot program under subsection (a) commences, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the pilot program.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The number of individuals who participated in the pilot program, including the number of new hires.

(B) The locations in which such individuals were employed by the Department, including how many such locations were rural or urban locations.

(C) An assessment of the quality of the work performed by such individuals in the course of such employment, including the performance reviews of such individuals.

(D) The number of psychiatrists the Secretary determines is needed by the Department in the future.

(3) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 90 days before the date on which the pilot program terminates under subsection (i), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives an update to the report submitted under paragraph (1) and any recommendations that the Secretary considers appropriate.

(h) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall prescribe regulations to carry out this section, including standards for qualified loans and authorized payees and other terms and conditions for the making of loan repayments.

(i) TERMINATION.—The authority to carry out the pilot program shall expire on the date that is 3 years after the date on which the Secretary commences the pilot program.

SEC. 5. PILOT PROGRAM ON COMMUNITY OUTREACH.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish a pilot program to assist veterans transitioning from serving on active duty and to improve the access of veterans to mental health services.

(b) LOCATIONS.—The Secretary shall carry out the pilot program under subsection (a) at not less than five Veterans Integrated Serv-

ice Networks that have a large population of veterans who—

(1) served in the reserve components of the Armed Forces; or

(2) are transitioning into communities with an established population of veterans after having recently separated from the Armed Forces.

(c) FUNCTIONS.—The pilot program at each Veterans Integrated Service Network described in subsection (b) shall include the following:

(1) A community oriented veteran peer support network, carried out in partnership with an appropriate entity with experience in peer support programs, that—

(A) establishes peer support training guidelines;

(B) develops a network of veteran peer support counselors to meet the demands of the communities in the Veterans Integrated Service Network;

(C) conducts training of veteran peer support counselors;

(D) with respect to one medical center selected by the Secretary in each such Veterans Integrated Service Network, has—

(i) a designated peer support specialist who acts as a liaison to the community oriented veteran peer network; and

(ii) a certified mental health professional designated as the community oriented veteran peer network mentor; and

(E) is readily available to veterans, including pursuant to the Veterans Integrated Service Network cooperating and working with State and local governments and appropriate entities.

(2) A community outreach team for each medical center selected by the Secretary pursuant to paragraph (1)(D) that—

(A) assists veterans transitioning into communities;

(B) establishes a veteran transition advisory group to facilitate outreach activities;

(C) includes the participation of appropriate community organizations, State and local governments, colleges and universities, chambers of commerce and other local business organizations, and organizations that provide legal aid or advice; and

(D) coordinates with the Veterans Integrated Service Network regarding the Veterans Integrated Service Network carrying out an annual mental health summit to assess the status of veteran mental health care in the community and to develop new or innovative means to provide mental health services to veterans.

(d) REPORTS.—

(1) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date on which the pilot program under subsection (a) commences, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the pilot program. With respect to each Veterans Integrated Service Network described in subsection (b), the report shall include—

(A) a full description of the peer support model implemented under the pilot program, participation data, and data pertaining to past and current mental health related hospitalizations and fatalities;

(B) recommendations on implementing peer support networks throughout the Department;

(C) whether the mental health resources made available under the pilot program for members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces is effective; and

(D) a full description of the activities and effectiveness of community outreach coordinating teams under the pilot program, including partnerships that have been established with appropriate entities.

(2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 90 days before the date on which the pilot program terminates under subsection (e), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives an update to the report submitted under paragraph (1).

(e) CONSTRUCTION.—This section may not be construed to authorize the Secretary to hire additional employees of the Department to carry out the pilot program under subsection (a).

(f) TERMINATION.—The authority of the Secretary to carry out the pilot program under subsection (a) shall terminate on the date that is 3 years after the date on which the pilot program commences.

SEC. 6. COLLABORATION ON SUICIDE PREVENTION EFFORTS BETWEEN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND NON-PROFIT MENTAL HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS.

(a) COLLABORATION.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may collaborate with non-profit mental health organizations to prevent suicide among veterans as follows:

(1) To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of suicide prevention efforts carried out by the Secretary and non-profit mental health organizations.

(2) To assist non-profit mental health organizations with the suicide prevention efforts of such organizations through the use of the expertise of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(3) To jointly carry out suicide prevention efforts.

(b) EXCHANGE OF RESOURCES.—In carrying out any collaboration under subsection (a), the Secretary and any non-profit mental health organization with which the Secretary is collaborating under such subsection shall exchange training sessions and best practices to help with the suicide prevention efforts of the Department and such organization.

(c) DIRECTOR OF SUICIDE PREVENTION COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall select within the Department a Director of Suicide Prevention Coordination to undertake any collaboration with non-profit mental health organizations under this section or any other provision of law.

SEC. 7. ADDITIONAL PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY FOR HEALTH CARE FOR CERTAIN VETERANS OF COMBAT SERVICE DURING CERTAIN PERIODS OF HOSTILITIES AND WAR.

Paragraph (3) of section 1710(e) of title 38, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(3) In the case of care for a veteran described in paragraph (1)(D), hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care may be provided under or by virtue of subsection (a)(2)(F) only during the following periods:

“(A) Except as provided by subparagraph (B), with respect to a veteran described in paragraph (1)(D) who is discharged or released from the active military, naval, or air service after January 27, 2003, the five-year period beginning on the date of such discharge or release.

“(B) With respect to a veteran described in paragraph (1)(D) who is discharged or released from the active military, naval, or air service after January 1, 2009, and before January 1, 2011, but did not enroll to receive such hospital care, medical services, or nursing home care pursuant to such paragraph during the five-year period described in subparagraph (A), the one-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act.

“(C) With respect to a veteran described in paragraph (1)(D) who is discharged or released from the active military, naval, or air

service on or before January 27, 2003, and did not enroll in the patient enrollment system under section 1705 of this title on or before such date, the three-year period beginning on January 27, 2008.”.

SEC. 8. PROHIBITION ON NEW APPROPRIATIONS.

No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act and the amendments made by this Act, and this Act and such amendments shall be carried out using amounts otherwise made available for such purposes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in proud support of H.R. 203, the Clay Hunt SAV Act. This bill was introduced by my good friend and a very important member of the Veterans Affairs' Committee, Congressman TIM WALZ from Minnesota. I am honored to join him and Congresswoman TAMMY DUCKWORTH from Illinois as an original cosponsor of this legislation. I am also grateful for the support of several of our military veterans' service organizations, including the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion, the Disabled American Veterans, the Military Officers Association of America, and the Wounded Warrior Project.

H.R. 203 is named after a true American hero, Clay Hunt. Clay was a Marine Corps veteran who served honorably in both Afghanistan and Iraq, where he was wounded in battle. Clay returned home grappling with posttraumatic stress disorder but refused to let his personal struggles prevent him from devoting his time to humanitarian work and advocacy on behalf of his fellow veterans. However, in March of 2011, at just 28 years of age, Clay took his own life.

With an average of 22 veterans committing suicide each day, Clay was far from alone in his pain, and his family and friends are far from alone in their heartbreak over his loss. The last several years have seen significant increases in the Department of Veterans Affairs' mental health and suicide prevention budget, staff, and programs; however, we have not seen a corresponding decrease in the number of our Nation's heroes who take their own lives. What is more, for some groups of veterans, including female veterans and veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan, suicide rates are actually getting worse.

Mr. Speaker, we have got to do more to help these veterans access the supportive services and mental health care that they need to save their lives. With the passage of H.R. 203, we will.

To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of VA programs and increase awareness of available services, H.R. 203 would require an annual third-party evaluation of VA's mental health care and suicide prevention programs and require that VA publish an interactive Web site to serve as a central source of information regarding VA mental health services.

To increase VA's capacity to meet the mental health care needs of our veterans, it would establish a pilot program that would repay education loans for individuals who have received a degree in psychiatric medicine and who agree to work at the VA for at least 2 years.

To create a seamless transition from Active Duty to veteran status and increased community support for those in need, it would establish another pilot program to assist veterans during transition and require VA to collaborate with nonprofit mental health organizations in the community.

Importantly, H.R. 203 would extend an additional 1 year of eligibility for VA health care services for certain combat veterans who have not yet enrolled and whose 5-year combat eligibility period recently expired.

Before I yield, I want to take a moment to once again express my condolences to Clay's family and friends as well as the families and friends of our honored veterans who have lost their lives to suicide. I want to offer them my personal commitment to continue the aggressive pursuit to end veteran suicide.

The passage of this bill today is just the first in what will be a continuing series of legislative and oversight efforts that our committee is going to undertake throughout the 114th Congress to improve access to mental health care for veterans in need, increase the efficiency and effectiveness of VA's mental health and suicide prevention programs, and increase meaningful partnerships with community providers who are often the first line of defense for their struggling veterans and the families of those veterans.

This bill, which passed the House last Congress, will not single-handedly halt the scourge of veteran suicide, but it is an important step, and it is a step that we owe Clay and those like him who desperately need and certainly deserve our help.

With that, I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 203.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 203, the Clay Hunt SAV Act. This legislation passed the House last month in the closing days of the 113th Congress.

I am pleased that we were able to act on this measure as one of the first items of business in the 114th Congress.

Providing the mental health care that veterans need and effectively dealing with the crisis of veteran suicides have been longstanding concerns of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. War is indeed terrible, and the effects of combat and service on our veterans lasts a lifetime. For far too long, society—and the military culture itself—has acted as if the need for mental health care treatment is a weakness and has discouraged adequate treatment. This attitude is changing, but it cannot change fast enough. In the area of mental health for our veterans and returning servicemembers, there is no easy answer or quick fix.

I appreciate the work of my friend from Minnesota, TIM WALZ; Chairman MILLER; and all of my colleagues on the committee in fashioning a bill that I believe will make a difference in the lives of our veterans.

H.R. 203 takes a number of important steps, including improving the safety net for at-risk veterans, while also introducing some accountability into the VA mental health care and suicide prevention program, using a third-party evaluation. It will provide veterans with a Web site that will serve as a centralized source of information on mental health services.

H.R. 203 initiates a program to help address some of the glaring mental health personnel shortages at the VA. While the incentives in this bill are limited to the psychiatry field, I would like to see this effort expanded in the future to all the mental health professional shortfalls.

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H.R. 203 would expand peer support networks, which we have heard are quite effectively used. And I believe the reporting requirement in this bill will confirm that additional resources should be permanently dedicated to fully utilizing peer support.

H.R. 203 would also provide an additional window of eligibility for combat veterans who may have missed the window of opportunity to sign up for VA health care. This extra time will help to ensure that veterans receive the health care, including mental health care, that they need.

I thank the chairman for working to bring this bill up quickly so that the House can act and send this important measure to the Senate. I look forward to working with Chairman MILLER, and with Florida being the State with the second-largest population of veterans and the most senior population, I know that the committee will do a good job having two of the leadership team from Florida.

But let me be clear: there are 435 Members of Congress, and each of them have veterans in their district, and we will work to make sure that all veterans get the care that they have earned and deserve.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the new ranking member for her words. I look forward to working with her on legislation in the future.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from the Second District of Indiana, from Elkhart, Indiana (Mrs. WALORSKI).

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Florida for yielding, and I am grateful to be here today to support the Clay Hunt SAV Act.

Every day, 22 veterans take their own lives. We have all experienced this in our districts; I have as well.

On March 31, 2011, Clay Hunt was one of those 22 veterans that day who took his own life. Today, we honor Clay and his family with the Clay Hunt SAV Act.

Clay's story was one of bravery and dedication. He relied on the VA for care and received a 30 percent disability rating for PTSD brought on during his service. He appealed the rating and encountered a bureaucratic nightmare.

Clay had to wait months to see a psychiatrist at a VA Medical Center. Two weeks later, Clay took his own life.

Five weeks after his death and 18 months after filing an appeal with the VA for his PTSD rating, his appeal was approved.

Clay's story details the urgency that our Nation's heroes deserve. The Clay Hunt SAV Act will increase access to mental health care and improve the quality of care troops and veterans receive.

Together, we can change this system so that no other veteran ever has to endure what thousands of veterans have already gone through, including Clay.

I am honored to stand here today and am grateful to my colleagues. I urge support for this legislation.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Florida has 16½ minutes remaining.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ).

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for your support of this important piece of legislation.

As you heard, we are here once again. We had a piece of legislation that attempted to, as I think the chairman spoke about, address an issue that cuts to the heart and the soul of this Nation: When our warriors come home, how can we reintegrate them?

And I think it is important, and I want to thank the chairman, one, for working so diligently on many numerous issues, but on this piece of legislation, and for bringing it back up again, but I think also for setting an example.

The Nation expects us to do what is right by our warriors. They expect us to work together to find solutions. Something that we do in the com-

mittee is looking and seeing where we can improve and pointing out where there are faults.

But that is not good enough. Pointing out the faults is one thing, and it is important. Finding solutions is what really matters, and this piece of legislation, I think, starts to do that.

To my colleagues who are here, I would say this. We can certainly disagree and disagree strongly and passionately. But I think if the public knew and they could feel it and, I think, in this piece of legislation see it, there are many more things that bind us together, and our care and our commitment for our warriors is one of those.

This is a piece of legislation that wasn't just written here in the Halls of Congress. It was written by the families, Susan and Richard Selke, Clay's parents; by the Houghtalings in Minnesota; and the Kellys in New Ulm, Minnesota; and each of these Members that you hear speak about it.

Since we passed this legislation, and it failed in the Senate, over 750 veterans have taken their lives.

Many times down here, we feel like everything we do is the most important thing that needs to happen now. Rarely is that true. In this case, it is.

We can't wait another day. We can't pass this problem forward because it is not only ripping at families, it is ripping at our Nation. These are our best and brightest.

You heard about Clay. Clay's a Marine who went to Iraq. He got shot by a sniper and, as a Marine, that irritated him. It didn't hurt him. He came back. He had his Purple Heart, and he could have come back and taken our thank yous. He didn't. He went to Afghanistan to continue on.

He knew the extremism that was threatening Iraq and Afghanistan would some day threaten this Nation, so he was forward. He did his time.

After he came back, that wasn't enough. He went to Haiti to help. After that, that wasn't enough. He sat in our offices on numerous occasions working on everything from access to the VA to the things you heard the gentlelady talk about in Indiana that were causing frustration amongst our veterans.

And I think for me the thing is, like for so many of us, Clay appeared to have everything. He appeared that he knew and was competent and had it there, but we all know that they have demons, and Clay had demons.

So what this piece of legislation does—you heard the specifics, and it does do specific things, and no one is claiming that this is going to be the fix.

But I would make the case that what the Clay Hunt bill has done and what it has done amongst our partners in the veterans service organizations is made it absolutely clear we will not leave anyone behind. We will not turn a blind eye to this, and we will not rest until we at least make the attempt to get that number down to zero. We may

never get there, but this piece of legislation starts to address it.

So I think it is important, and I want to thank the ranking member for being on this bill and putting it forward, and the chairman, who was an original author of this and has been instrumental in making it happen.

What we are doing here is not just passing legislation. What we are doing here is changing the attitudes, focusing the Nation's attention on this, because I don't care if it is Elkhart, Indiana, if it is Pensacola, Florida, or if it is Mankato, Minnesota.

When we go to talk to our constituents, regardless of their political leanings, they tell us, take care of our warriors, do what is right. Fix the system.

This piece of legislation does that. It does it in a cost-effective, smart manner, and we have got the opportunity to start moving forward.

I would say and encourage my colleagues, let's pass this thing, but let's not see it as an end result of a process we have been working on. Let's see it as the first of many things to try and make changes to be smarter about how we use taxpayer dollars, but also to demand effectiveness, because Clay's parents deserve that. Thousands of others across this Nation deserve that.

The more than 1 million veterans that will return over the next few years are counting on us to put everything in place to provide that help.

So I encourage my colleagues, support this legislation. I encourage my colleagues, take this as an example.

I want to thank Speaker BOEHNER and Majority Leader MCCARTHY for making it a priority. I think it speaks volumes. This piece of legislation is on the floor in the first week. That says something, that there is a commitment to getting it right, there is a commitment to working together, and there is a commitment to showing effectiveness for the American people.

So, we have got that opportunity. I ask my colleagues to support this legislation, get engaged with what is happening with our veterans, and let's prove that their service was not in vain, that this democracy is strong, that our commitment to them is unwavering and that, at the end of the day, that is what really matters.

Mr. Speaker, I am very grateful for the opportunity to again tell you about a very important piece of legislation that will help in our fight to improve mental health care for our returning warriors: H.R. 203, the Clay Hunt SAV Act. I'd like to thank the Chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, Mr. MILLER, and Rep. DUCKWORTH for continuing to be my partners in this effort. I'd also like to thank Speaker BOEHNER for bringing this to the floor swiftly. And, a big thank you to Senators MCCAIN, BURR, BLUMENTHAL, and ISAKSON for all their work on the SAV Act. Most importantly, I'd like to thank Clay's parents, Susan and Richard Selke. They are holding Congress' feet to the fire to make sure we get this done and to prevent another family from going through what they continue to go

through each and every day. We cannot let them down.

H.R. 203, the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act, is an example of how we can work together on Capitol Hill. The legislation is named in honor of Iraq and Afghanistan War Veteran and suicide prevention advocate, Clay Hunt. Clay epitomized what it meant to live a life of service, both in and out of uniform. He helped countless veterans overcome their demons but tragically took his own life in March of 2011. The legacy he left behind, however, will live on for generations to come.

The bill you see before you was the result of strong partnerships with our veteran service organizations, strong bipartisan efforts here in Congress, and the resolve of Clay's parents pushing and pushing and pushing to get this thing done. This bill is what you get when you have folks sitting around the table, trusting one another, and working together to get it right for our nation's veterans.

Our premise for this bill was simple: suicide occurs because many vets return to their community and then disconnect from it. So, we wanted to create a bill that would get the communities involved and coordinated. We also knew it would be important to increase both oversight of the VA and their capacity to deal with over a million veterans returning from war.

Specifically, the bill:

1. Establishes a peer support and community outreach pilot program to assist transitioning servicemembers with accessing VA mental health care services.

2. Requires the VA to create a one-stop, interactive website to serve as a centralized source of information regarding all mental health services for veterans.

3. Addresses the shortage of mental health care professionals by authorizing the VA to conduct a student loan repayment pilot program aimed at recruiting and retaining psychiatrists.

4. Requires yearly evaluations—with interim reports due in the first two years and a final report due the third year and every year after—conducted by a third party, of all mental health care and suicide prevention practices and programs at the VA to find out what is working and what's not working and to make recommendations to improve care. Authorizes a Government Accountability Office (GAO) report on the transition of care for PTSD and TBI between the DoD and the VA.

One veteran lost to suicide is one too many. With many of our warriors returning from war, all too often our heroes return only to face a war of their own at home. While there is no bill that will completely end veteran suicide, this bipartisan measure is a step in the right direction. In short, it's a start towards fixing a problem, but we must not lose focus on this problem after passing this bill. We must continue working to improve care for our veterans. I urge my colleagues to support this measure so that we can send it over to the Senate and onto the President swiftly.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from the Sixth District of Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO), a new member of the committee, who, in his first week, has already jumped in with both feet. Mr. COSTELLO has been to my office and started looking closely at the oversight agenda that we have.

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. I thank the distinguished gentleman from Florida for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here today to express my support of Congressman TIM WALZ's Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act.

It is a privilege to serve on the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs and in this Congress, to work to improve the quality of life for our Nation's veterans, their families, and their caregivers.

In the coming months, I look forward to working in a bipartisan, commonsense manner with dedicated Members and veterans like my colleague from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) to find solutions to help our Nation's veterans transition to civilian life.

One of the most critical areas that we as a committee and Congress must work to establish is comprehensive, timely, responsive, and effective mental health care services for our post-9/11 veterans, many of whom have served our country for multiple deployments in conditions not witnessed or experienced by any other generation of soldier.

This bill first prioritizes bringing accountability to the VA. By bringing in a third party to conduct an annual evaluation within the Department of Veterans Affairs, we can better provide agency accountability by doing just this.

Second, we must provide better access to mental health services for our veterans and their families. This bill does just that.

Finally, it helps facilitate and increase awareness for peer and community support providers for our veterans and their families.

This commonsense legislation works towards those priorities of providing an accountable and supportive VA for our veterans, in furtherance of helping veterans get the best treatment possible.

So, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this commonsense legislation to promote mental health support for our Nation's heroes and thank Congressman WALZ for his leadership on this important legislation.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, this is an appropriate and wonderful statement of two distinguished Members of Congress, the chairman and ranking member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, and I associate myself with their words on how crucial this legislation is, and what an important statement the Veterans' Affairs Committee is making: that there is no party affiliation when it comes to saving the lives of our men and women who put on the uniform.

To the author of this bill, Mr. WALZ, as I chatted with him on the floor, I in-

dicted to him that just this weekend I met for hours with two wounded warriors, both of them having experience with PTSD, both of them being challenged about the transition into civilian life, both of them knowing of this legislation, feeling left out and deprived that it did not, despite the valiant effort of this House, pass in the last Congress.

So let me congratulate all of you for recognizing that this is a crucial, life-saving element of the men and women that we stand and admire and love. Every day, 22 veterans take their lives, but it is 8,000 a year.

And if I might say, Texas walks alongside of Florida and other States in having the highest number of returning vets. Two million served in Iraq and Afghanistan across the Nation. Now, one-third, 600,000, have experienced traumatic brain injury and PTSD.

From the early years of working with then-Chairman and Ranking Member Murtha, I was privileged to bring \$1 million to my district for PTSD, but that is not the heart of it.

The bleeding and the sorrow of these men and women is not befitting of the service and the uniform that they put on. Not one moment should they wait at a veterans hospital for treatment for PTSD that should keep them grounded. Not one moment should they be alone contemplating suicide, without treatment and friends and family having assistance.

This bill makes that statement, H.R. 203, the Clay Hunt SAV Act. It says that you are not alone and that we have put our actions where our words are. We have walked the walk.

So I want to say to those wounded warriors who shared their heart with me, proudly come back and say: This bill is moving, and as it moves to the United States Senate, this bill is moving. And as we look to the President's desk, a signature will allow this bill to be in place.

To those who missed the deadline, this law will allow you to still be able to receive that treatment because it allows an extended time for those who have missed the deadline.

I know as I go back home to Texas and meet families that they are looking for action when it comes to our beloved veterans and those who have put on the uniform to serve this Nation as they watched their comrades die. This is a bill that says, God bless America.

□ 1730

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. This is a bill that reflects the Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, and our wonderful Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

I want to say to my friends at Ellington Field, which is just down the road

from my congressional district, and to the many bases across the State of Texas that have amongst their ranks veterans who have served in Active Duty and who are still pressing forward in spite of conditions that they face, this is the bill that provides the answer and the love and affection for the veterans and military personnel who have put on the uniform every day and who have never—never once—shied away from their duty and decided that their lives and their ills were greater than their commitment to this Nation.

We owe them this. This is a “God bless America” bill. I thank the proponents of it.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would like to inquire of the ranking member how many speakers she has left.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. The last speaker just finished. I have no additional speakers.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. We have no additional speakers either, so we are prepared to close.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It is unacceptable that 22 veterans are dying by suicide every day. We need to pull all stakeholders together to work as a group to solve the problem. There is not one cause and not one answer. There are a multitude of answers and a multitude of causes and solutions.

The Department of Defense, the VA, and the veterans service organizations need to work together to come up with many solutions that will meet the needs. There is not one solution but many. I pledge to work with my colleague from Minnesota and Chairman MILLER to address the issues in the upcoming session.

Access to mental health care and benefits for our veterans is an issue I plan to focus on in the months ahead, and I look forward to working with all of my colleagues to ensure that veterans are given the benefits and services that they have earned.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON).

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the ranking member, and certainly, I want to thank the chairman. I won't take the 2 minutes, but I want to thank them for their incredible cooperation on this most important of issues.

Derek Denfeld, from my district, lost his life. There has been sadness and the coming together of the community. Our hearts go out to his wife, Heather; to his son, Felix; and certainly to his parents, Deb and Chris, whom I know personally.

I thank the ranking member. I thank the sergeant major for his sponsorship

of this bill, and I thank the ranking member and the chairman for what is an important piece of legislation.

As noted, we can't wait another day for this to take effect.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I appreciate the comments from both sides of the aisle, and I look forward to working with all of our colleagues on future issues as they relate to the Department of Veterans Affairs and, in particular, the SAV Act.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I was pleased that my colleagues unanimously agreed during the 113th Congress that we must act to combat Veteran suicide and I am grateful that we are acting quickly in the first days of the 114th Congress to address this critical unfinished business. The statistics are heartbreaking. An average of 22 Veterans commit suicide every day. So each day that we delay action is a day we cannot afford. I was proud to help introduce HR. 5059, Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act with Chairman JEFF MILLER and Representative TIM WALZ. While there is no bill that will completely end Veteran suicide, this comprehensive measure is a step in the right direction. It will remove barriers that prevent our nation's heroes from getting the quality, timely mental health care that they deserve. It is my sincere hope that my colleagues in the Senate will take note of the momentum in the House and bring this legislation to the Senate Floor as soon as possible.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 203.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 33) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 33

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act”.

SEC. 2. EMERGENCY SERVICES, GOVERNMENT, AND CERTAIN NONPROFIT VOLUNTEERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4980H(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by redesignating paragraphs (5), (6), and (7) as paragraphs (6), (7), and (8), respectively, and by inserting after paragraph (4) the following new paragraph:

“(5) SPECIAL RULES FOR CERTAIN EMERGENCY SERVICES, GOVERNMENT, AND NONPROFIT VOLUNTEERS.—

“(A) EMERGENCY SERVICES VOLUNTEERS.—Qualified services rendered as a bona fide volunteer to an eligible employer shall not be taken into account under this section as service provided by an employee. For purposes of the preceding sentence, the terms ‘qualified services’, ‘bona fide volunteer’, and ‘eligible employer’ shall have the respective meanings given such terms under section 457(e).

“(B) CERTAIN OTHER GOVERNMENT AND NONPROFIT VOLUNTEERS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Services rendered as a bona fide volunteer to a specified employer shall not be taken into account under this section as service provided by an employee.

“(ii) BONA FIDE VOLUNTEER.—For purposes of this subparagraph, the term ‘bona fide volunteer’ means an employee of a specified employer whose only compensation from such employer is in the form of—

“(I) reimbursement for (or reasonable allowance for) reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of services by volunteers, or

“(II) reasonable benefits (including length of service awards), and nominal fees, customarily paid by similar entities in connection with the performance of services by volunteers.

“(iii) SPECIFIED EMPLOYER.—For purposes of this subparagraph, the term ‘specified employer’ means—

“(I) any government entity, and

“(II) any organization described in section 501(c) and exempt from tax under section 501(a).

“(iv) COORDINATION WITH SUBPARAGRAPH (A).—This subparagraph shall not fail to apply with respect to services merely because such services are qualified services (as defined in section 457(e)(11)(C)).”

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to months beginning after December 31, 2013.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) and the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 33, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am here bringing forward Mr. BARLETTA's bill, and it is really simple. One of the cornerstones of our civil society—one of the great pieces of the American story—is volunteerism but, in particular, volunteerism among our first responders.

So many of us represent congressional districts that thrive on and exist on and preserve their safety on volunteer firefighters and first responders. Unfortunately, in the Affordable Care Act, there is a huge glitch. Under ObamaCare, volunteer firefighters and first responders are counted in many ways as if they were full-time equivalent employees, and therefore, volunteer fire departments are getting hit with enormous fines, mandates, and taxes.

It shouldn't be that way. It is causing a huge paperwork burden, not to mention a fiscal drain on the budgets of these small fire departments and emergency responding agencies in our communities and in rural areas all across America. This legislation fixes this.

I want to thank Congressman BARLETTA for introducing this because he clearly understands as a former mayor and as someone who represents Pennsylvania, which I know has a lot of volunteer firefighters just like we do in rural Wisconsin, that these are the lifeblood of our communities.

The last thing that they need to do when they are so concerned about preserving public safety and health is to worry about all of these ObamaCare mandates. Mr. BARLETTA's bill preserves the freedom to operate for our 780,000 public service volunteer firefighters. It removes this mandate and exempts them from this onerous mandate, so they can continue providing the public service that they have been right now.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA), the author of this legislation.

Mr. BARLETTA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, H.R. 33, the Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act.

This is a good, truly bipartisan bill that protects our first responders, our volunteer firefighters, and emergency services personnel. It protects them by ensuring that they are not considered employees under the employer mandate provision of ObamaCare.

If they were, some fire companies would be forced to pay for the volunteers' health insurance or pay a fine, driving many fire departments out of business. As a former mayor, I know how important volunteer fire companies are to the health and safety of a community. Simply put, this is a public safety issue.

I first learned about this issue from a volunteer firefighter, Bob Timko, back home, and I began a crusade to clear this up for volunteer firefighters and localities and the residents of Pennsylvania and every other State.

As you know, the employer mandate of ObamaCare kicks in for employers with 50 or more employees. Now, some fire companies may hear about this and immediately think, "Well, we only have 25 volunteers, so we are safe. We don't have 50."

That may not necessarily be the case. Some fire companies are considered part of their local government. If you take the number of firefighters, paid and unpaid, and add them to the number of other public employees, such as highway workers, police, code enforcement officers, health officers, and clerical workers, you can easily reach 50, even in a small town.

This would be a very big deal in my home State of Pennsylvania, where 97 percent of our fire companies are either completely or mostly volunteers. Nationally, almost 92 percent of fire companies use at least some volunteers, and over 86 percent depend on all or mostly volunteers.

Those numbers come from the 2012 National Fire Department Census conducted by the United States Fire Administration. If your district is like mine, then volunteer firefighters are ingrained in your community.

We won an initial battle on this issue. After I raised it with the IRS and brought pressure to bear through this legislation, they finally relented and changed their rules regarding the Federal tax status of volunteer firefighters.

However, this is too important of a public safety issue to be left to the changing positions of unelected Federal bureaucrats at the IRS. Their arbitrary regulatory guidance could easily be changed back.

Our people back home deserve better. We owe our emergency service volunteers, who risk their lives every day, rock-solid certainty. This legislation says, once and for all, that volunteer firefighters are just that—volunteers—and should not be subjected to the employer mandate. It takes away the power of the IRS to change the rules.

I want to thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their continued support. Last year, this bill passed the Ways and Means Committee by a strong bipartisan vote of 37-0, and it passed the House by a very rare unanimous vote of 410-0. Not one single Member, Republican or Democrat, opposed it.

I want to thank Speaker BOEHNER, Majority Leader MCCARTHY, Majority Whip SCALISE, the Ways and Means Committee, and their staffs. We all recognize that my bill is a simple, bipartisan solution to an unforeseen consequence of the President's health care law.

This bill has the strong support of the National Volunteer Fire Council, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, and the Congressional Fire Services Institute. I want to thank my partners, as well as the men and women they represent, for their help.

To be clear, forcing volunteer fire companies to comply with ObamaCare will not extend health insurance to the uninsured; rather, it will close firehouses, placing people at risk.

I strongly urge the passage of this bill.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to start off by certainly extending congratulations to Representative BARLETTA for his persistency in continuing to bring this legislation forward. As he has pointed out, it has been bipartisanly supported, and it deserves passage. It passed unanimously, as he indicated, in both the Ways and Means Committee and also unanimously on this floor, which is no small order.

Of course, it comes in the midst of controversy. I say "controversy" because—well, our distinguished chairman is to be congratulated as well for not only bringing this bill forward, but also for the great victory that was won by the Green Bay Packers yesterday.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. In a moment, because I do want to continue my praise of the Aaron Rodgers look-alike.

Today, our distinguished chairman announced that he is not running for President. We think that it is so that his look-alike, Aaron Rodgers, may fill that void. I know that it was an outstanding victory by the Packers yesterday, but it was not without controversy on our own committee.

I know that KENNY MARCHANT, KEVIN BRADY, and SAM JOHNSON are very concerned about this, but as the chairman said, "The rules are the rules," and we should proceed from there.

□ 1745

But I also want to thank all of those, and especially the chairman, who raised the point about volunteer firefighters. All of us have that visual in our minds, of course, of those going up the stairs so that people can come down the stairs. And since September 11, and noting that volunteer firefighters cover more than 70 percent of this country, this clearly is a bill that was worthy of the unanimous approval and consent that it received and, as I indicated, is bipartisanly supported by our entire delegation.

I want to commend the gentleman from Connecticut, Representative COURTNEY, who will speak later, and also the gentlewoman from Connecticut, Representative ESTY, and also the National Volunteer Fire Council, which has been 1,000 percent behind this and also other tax issues that are going to be coming before our committee that have been bipartisanly supported as well by Representative REICHERT, Tom Latham, and others. And I know that we share the bipartisan spirit in this.

I also would like to say that, along with firefighters, the many people who are emergency medical volunteers could benefit from a number of volunteer tax breaks that we could provide as well. I look forward to working with our distinguished chairman and, again, commend the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Representative BARLETTA.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds to say that I

appreciate the kind words from the gentleman from Connecticut.

This is bipartisan. It is wonderful when we can work together and find common ground to get things done and find common ground where the completion of a pass is the completion of a pass, it is a rule.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I yield to the gentleman from Connecticut.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. We are especially gratified, though, in a true show of compassionate conservatism that you reached out to the chief fan of the Jersey Cowboys—excuse me—the Dallas Cowboys, Chris Christie, to provide him with both a hug and a sincere gesture from Wisconsin.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Reclaiming my time, all in good jest.

With that, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY), a member of the full committee.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise in very strong support of H.R. 33, and I want to thank Speaker BOEHNER and Majority Leader MCCARTHY for allowing this legislation to come forward so early in this Congress.

I agree with the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON). People always say: I wish you guys could get along; just get something done. This is something that we overwhelmingly believe in and we are going to get done.

I think that the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) has explained very clearly that it has to become statute. It can't be left to be some nebulous fact that is rolling around out there.

Now, these people who do this work—and in Pennsylvania, 97 percent, almost eight out of every 10 firefighters come from the volunteer aspect of it; they are not paid. Yet because of some type of allowance they are given, they fall under the Affordable Care Act, and this would destroy volunteer fire departments as we know them. So what Mr. BARLETTA has very thoughtfully done is he has put forth a piece of legislation that would guarantee that these folks don't have to worry about that.

Now, I have got to tell you, in the little town that I grew up in and live in, Butler, Pennsylvania, so many people volunteer their time to do the volunteer fire fighting. They are also the EMS. They are the first responders.

Last spring, one of our volunteer firemen by the name of Ryan Sekerski, on his way home from work, he heard over his scanner that a fuel truck had overturned. The driver was trapped inside that truck. He then went to the scene of the accident, got his equipment that was in the trunk of his car, got out, and saved that driver's life. These are the people that we are talking about.

When you come to the people's House, America's House, America's Congress, we look at the things that we can do together, things that just make sense. While we may disagree on some

other aspects of what it is that we try to get done, on this, we are solid. This just makes sense for America. This makes sense for all those that lay their life on the line anytime there is an emergency or a fire. They do it voluntarily.

Hundreds and thousands of hours in training go into this. They spend time away from their families. They take time away from personal time, where they could be doing other things, to get trained so that they can help other Americans who may need their help. It is absolutely incredible. It is so American. It is something we look at with a great sense of pride.

And we went to the IRS and said: Listen, what we really need now is a statute that guarantees that these volunteer fire departments will not be put under pressure, where they would have to go out of business.

This is not a health care issue, not as far as it is supplying health care or paying a fine for those that volunteer; but this is a health care issue for every single American for whom these people supply necessary services on a voluntary basis to save their lives and their property.

So I think the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) is a champion on this issue. He was in the last Congress and the fact that it has come forward again—it is so overwhelmingly supported by both sides of our House that it truly is America's Congress. It truly is America's issue. It truly is an issue that makes sense for all of us. It is maybe our small way of thanking all those folks that do that every day without any pay, just because of the greatness in their hearts.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I really deeply appreciate the words of my colleague and fellow member of the Ways and Means Committee. Again, I want to commend the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA).

I want to submit for the RECORD a letter from the Department of the Treasury that, at the bequest of a number of Members bipartisanly submitted and they made the changes to the rules.

B. EXCLUSIONS FROM DEFINITION OF HOUR OF SERVICE

Commenters requested that hours of service performed in certain capacities not be counted as an hour of service. The final regulations adopt the following changes in response to these comments.

1. VOLUNTEER EMPLOYEES

Commenters requested that hours of service performed in the capacity of a volunteer for a government entity or tax-exempt organization not be counted as hours of service for purposes of section 4980H. Under the definition of hour of service outlined in these regulations, an hour of service is generally defined as an hour for which an employee is paid or entitled to payment. Accordingly, hours worked by a volunteer who does not receive (and is not entitled to receive) compensation in exchange for the performance of services are not treated as hours of service for purposes of section 4980H.

Commenters noted, however, that some volunteers receive compensation in the form

of expense reimbursements, stipends, contributions to employee benefit plans, or nominal wages. Local governments, for instance, noted that many volunteer firefighters or other emergency responders are paid a salary or an hourly wage, generally at a rate lower than the rate paid to non-volunteers performing services in a similar capacity. Other volunteer firefighters or emergency responders may receive expense reimbursements or other fees each time they respond to a call. Commenters generally expressed concern that volunteer service would be discouraged if volunteer hours were required to be counted when determining whether the individual is a full-time employee for purposes of section 4980H.

In response to these concerns, the final regulations provide that hours of service do not include hours worked as a "bona fide volunteer." For this purpose, the definition of "bona fide volunteer" is generally based on the definition of that term for purposes of section 457(e)(11)(B)(i), which provides special rules for length of service awards offered to certain volunteer firefighters and emergency medical providers under a municipal deferred compensation plan. For purposes of section 4980H, however, bona fide volunteers are not limited to volunteer firefighters and emergency medical providers. Rather, bona fide volunteers include any volunteer who is an employee of a government entity or an organization described in section 501(c) that is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) whose only compensation from that entity or organization is in the form of (i) reimbursement for (or reasonable allowance for) reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of services by volunteers, or (ii) reasonable benefits (including length of service awards), and nominal fees, customarily paid by similar entities in connection with the performance of services by volunteers.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I think it is both appropriate and right that we codify this and put it into a law.

With that, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut, JOE COURTNEY, one of the chief sponsors who, along with ELIZABETH ESTY, helped engineer this bill.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to congratulate the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) for his leadership on this legislation, which has been noted.

As we are standing here today, there are probably thousands of calls happening all across the country for fire suppression, for medical emergencies, for people with all types of difficulties that volunteers—people who don't have to step up and train and spend all the hours and be available at the expense of their family time and their work time—will respond to these calls.

And for a lot of communities that rely on volunteers, the issue of recruitment and retention and just trying to make the environment conducive for people to make that act of volunteering is a challenge that I think all of us hear about from our volunteer fire departments and first responders all across the Nation.

So when this issue of the Affordable Care Act being possibly a requirement for the shared responsibilities of employers was out there, again, I applaud Mr. BARLETTA for stepping up, introducing this legislation, and following

up with mail to the IRS Commissioner. They did respond almost exactly a year ago, saying that the regulations would not count bona fide volunteers in terms of the 50-employee count. But as was noted, I think it is always better to have it in statute rather than rely on the whims of administrative agencies that can change with the change of administration. So again, I think this is an example of how the country really wants us to operate.

Again, if you look at the Affordable Care Act, since its passage, we have worked together to eliminate the 1099 filing requirement; we have worked together to make sure that our military families, through TRICARE, would have age 26 coverage, which was left out when the bill was initially filed; and here today, we are following up again with an example of commonsense fixes to the legislation, which is what I think the country really is looking for.

I would also note that the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) has legislation to restore tax exclusions which were on the books a number of years ago to help volunteer fire departments use property tax exemptions and equipment donations that had been treated as income by the IRS in past years.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. I yield the gentleman an additional minute.

Mr. COURTNEY. Unfortunately, those tax exemptions expired. And I know, again, the gentleman—and I am sure with bipartisan support—is going to introduce measures to bring those back and, again, allow these departments that are struggling to retain and recruit to have the tools so that they can make it easier, rather than having to file 1040s and drive people crazy around tax filing time for things like boots and coats and a property tax exemption being treated as taxable income.

So again, I look forward to the passage of this legislation with the huge bipartisan margin that we saw last year; and given the administration's response to our entreaties, again, I fully expect that there will be a bill signing ceremony at the White House, assuming it gets through the Senate. Again, with that, I would urge passage.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time other than to close.

May I inquire of the gentleman from Connecticut?

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. I have no further requests for time.

JOE COURTNEY said, "Don't forget to mention the Patriots," so I would be remiss if I didn't.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank Representative COURTNEY also for recognizing the Volunteer Responder Incentive Protection Reauthorization Act, as I mentioned

earlier, which is something that has been bipartisanly cosponsored in the past by Representatives REICHERT, Latham, myself, and others.

The distinguished chairman and I, who are classmates, who came into this Congress together—he has also been a great proponent and advocate for making sure that these volunteers, who never were intended in both the case of Mr. BARLETTA and also in the case of the IRS, something that is administratively burdening for the IRS, this is, as Mr. KELLY so passionately said, something that is common sense, that we ought to work on together, and that we ought to provide the relief for, those who provide more than 70 percent of the volunteer aid across this country, especially when it comes to fighting fires. And our National Volunteer Fire Council is supportive of this as is the Fire Chiefs Association. I am looking forward to working with my colleagues across the aisle to ensure this.

Again, with that, I commend and congratulate the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) and thank him for his fine work in this area, and I look forward to supporting him on future endeavors.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself just a few moments to say to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON), I appreciate him for his comity, for the bipartisan nature of this.

I would say to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY), first, they have to get through some tough luck—Andrew Luck, in particular—in order to make it to where they want to go.

With that, for the purpose of closing on his own bill, I would like to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA).

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleagues on both sides. There are very few times when you have a vote here that is unanimous, and it is for a simple reason. It is that everyone here understands and appreciates what these men and women in our communities are willing to do to make the community safe.

You know, as a mayor, I have come to appreciate the volunteer firefighters more than I could ever imagine. Many times, I have watched them stand out in the middle of a road with a boot, trying to raise money so that they could buy gear or equipment or get more training. The volunteers ask very little of their community compared to what they are willing to give, and that is the ultimate sacrifice. They are willing to give their lives for people that they don't even know. They are willing to walk into a burning fire.

I can remember one night, our local fire department in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, they ran in, and they came out with a little baby whose life they saved. And I also remember a day when

they couldn't save a life and how it affected every one of those men and women as if it were their own child. They have a lot to worry about, and what they shouldn't worry about is where they are going to get money to provide health insurance or pay a fine. I am sure this was an unintended consequence, and we here recognize that.

So again, I want to thank the chairman and my colleagues for standing with me and saluting the real American heroes, the men and women who volunteer to save us, our first responders.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 33.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 6 p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BYRNE) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Suspending the rules and passing H.R. 203;

Suspending the rules and passing H.R. 33;

Agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

CLAY HUNT SUICIDE PREVENTION FOR AMERICAN VETERANS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the

bill (H.R. 203) to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide for the conduct of annual evaluations of mental health care and suicide prevention programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to require a pilot program on loan repayment for psychiatrists who agree to serve in the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 403, nays 0, not voting 29, as follows:

[Roll No. 17]

YEAS—403

Abraham	Conaway	Granger
Adams	Connolly	Graves (GA)
Aderholt	Conyers	Graves (LA)
Aguilar	Cook	Graves (MO)
Allen	Cooper	Grayson
Amash	Costa	Green, Al
Amodel	Costello (PA)	Green, Gene
Ashford	Courtney	Griffith
Babin	Cramer	Grijalva
Barletta	Crawford	Grothman
Barr	Crenshaw	Guinta
Barton	Crowley	Guthrie
Bass	Cuellar	Gutiérrez
Beatty	Culberson	Hanna
Becerra	Curbelo (FL)	Hardy
Benishhek	Davis (CA)	Harper
Bera	Davis, Danny	Harris
Beyer	Davis, Rodney	Hartzler
Bilirakis	DeFazio	Hastings
Bishop (GA)	DeGette	Heck (NV)
Bishop (MI)	Delaney	Heck (WA)
Bishop (UT)	DeLauro	Hensarling
Black	DelBene	Herrera Beutler
Blackburn	Denham	Higgins
Blum	Dent	Hill
Blumenauer	DeSantis	Himes
Bonamici	DeSaulnier	Hinojosa
Bost	Deutch	Holding
Boustany	Diaz-Balart	Honda
Boyle (PA)	Dingell	Hoyer
Brady (PA)	Doggett	Hudson
Brat	Dold	Huelskamp
Bridenstine	Doyle (PA)	Huffman
Brooks (AL)	Duffy	Huizenga (MI)
Brooks (IN)	Duncan (SC)	Hultgren
Brown (FL)	Duncan (TN)	Hunter
Brownley (CA)	Edwards	Hurd (TX)
Buchanan	Ellison	Hurt (VA)
Buck	Ellmers	Israel
Bucshon	Emmer	Issa
Burgess	Engel	Jackson Lee
Bustos	Eshoo	Jeffries
Butterfield	Esty	Jennings (KS)
Byrne	Farenthold	Jenkins (WV)
Calvert	Farr	Johnson (GA)
Capps	Fattah	Johnson (OH)
Capuano	Fincher	Johnson, E. B.
Cárdenas	Fitzpatrick	Johnson, Sam
Carson (IN)	Fleischmann	Jolly
Carter (GA)	Fleming	Jones
Carter (TX)	Flores	Jordan
Cartwright	Forbes	Joyce
Castor (FL)	Fortenberry	Kaptur
Castro (TX)	Foster	Keating
Chabot	Fox	Kelly (PA)
Chaffetz	Frankel (FL)	Kennedy
Chu (CA)	Franks (AZ)	Kildee
Cicilline	Frelinghuysen	Killmer
Clark (MA)	Fudge	Kind
Clarke (NY)	Gabbard	King (IA)
Clawson (FL)	Gallago	King (NY)
Clay	Garamendi	Kirkpatrick
Cleaver	Garrett	Kline
Clyburn	Gibbs	Knight
Coffman	Gibson	Kuster
Cole	Goodlatte	Labrador
Collins (GA)	Gosar	LaMalfa
Collins (NY)	Gowdy	Lamborn
Comstock	Graham	Lance

Langevin	Nugent	Sewell (AL)
Larsen (WA)	Nunes	Sherman
Larson (CT)	O'Rourke	Shimkus
Latta	Olson	Shuster
Lawrence	Palazzo	Simpson
Levin	Pallone	Sinema
Lewis	Palmer	Sires
Lieu (CA)	Pascrell	Slaughter
Lipinski	Paulsen	Smith (MO)
LoBiondo	Payne	Smith (NE)
Loebback	Pearce	Smith (NJ)
Lofgren	Pelosi	Smith (TX)
Long	Perry	Speier
Loudermilk	Peters	Stefanik
Love	Peterson	Stewart
Lowenthal	Pingree	Stivers
Lowe	Pittenger	Stutzman
Lucas	Pitts	Swalwell (CA)
Luetkemeyer	Poe (TX)	Takai
Lujan Grisham	Poliquin	Takano
(NM)	Polis	Thompson (CA)
Luján, Ben Ray	Pompeo	Thompson (MS)
(NM)	Posey	Thompson (PA)
Lummis	Price (GA)	Thornberry
MacArthur	Price (NC)	Tiberi
Maloney,	Quigley	Tipton
Carolyn	Rangel	Tonko
Maloney, Sean	Ratcliffe	Torres
Marchant	Reed	Trott
Marino	Reichert	Tsongas
Massie	Renacci	Turner
Matsui	Ribble	Upton
McCarthy	Rice (NY)	Van Hollen
McCaul	Rice (SC)	Vargas
McClintock	Richmond	Veasey
McCollum	Rigell	Vela
McDermott	Roby	Velázquez
McGovern	Roe (TN)	Visclosky
McHenry	Rogers (KY)	Wagner
McKinley	Rohrabacher	Walberg
McMorris	Rokita	Walker
Rodgers	Rooney (FL)	Walorski
McNerney	Ros-Lehtinen	Walters, Mimi
McSally	Roskam	Walz
Meadows	Ross	Waters, Maxine
Meehan	Rothfus	Watson Coleman
Meeks	Rouzer	Weber (TX)
Meng	Royce	Webster (FL)
Messer	Ruiz	Welch
Mica	Ruppersberger	Wenstrup
Miller (FL)	Russell	Westerman
Miller (MI)	Ryan (WI)	Whitfield
Moelenaar	Salmon	Williams
Mooney (WV)	Sanchez, Loretta	Wilson (FL)
Moore	Sanford	Wilson (SC)
Moulton	Sarbanes	Wittman
Mullin	Scalise	Womack
Mulvaney	Schakowsky	Woodall
Murphy (PA)	Schiff	Yarmuth
Nadler	Schock	Yoder
Napolitano	Schweikert	Yoho
Neal	Scott (VA)	Young (AK)
Neugebauer	Scott, Austin	Young (IA)
Newhouse	Scott, David	Young (IN)
Noem	Sensenbrenner	Zeldin
Nolan	Serrano	Zinke
Norcross	Sessions	

NOT VOTING—29

Brady (TX)	Kinzinger (IL)	Sánchez, Linda
Carney	Lee	T.
Cohen	Lynch	Schrader
Cummings	Murphy (FL)	Smith (WA)
DesJarlais	Perlmutter	Titus
Duckworth	Pocan	Valadao
Gohmert	Rogers (AL)	Walden
Hahn	Roybal-Allard	Wasserman
Hice (GA)	Rush	Schultz
Katko	Ryan (OH)	Westmoreland
Kelly (IL)		

SWEARING IN OF MEMBERS-ELECT

The SPEAKER (during the vote). During this vote the Chair will administer the oath of office to several Members who have not yet had the opportunity to have the oath of office administered to them.

Will the Members-elect please present themselves in the well.

Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, and Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California appeared at the bar of the House and took the oath of office, as follows:

Do you solemnly swear that you will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that you will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that you take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that you will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which you are about to enter, so help you God.

The SPEAKER. Congratulations. You are now Members of the 114th Congress.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER (during the vote). Under clause 5(d) of rule XX, the Chair announces to the House that, in light of the administration of the oath to the gentlewoman from California and the gentlemen from Alaska and Texas, the whole number of the House is now 433.

□ 1900

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN changed her vote from "nay" to "yea."

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIRE-FIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BYRNE). The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 33) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 401, nays 0, not voting 31, as follows:

[Roll No. 18]

YEAS—401

Abraham	Bishop (UT)	Byrne
Adams	Black	Calvert
Aderholt	Blackburn	Capps
Aguilar	Blum	Capuano
Allen	Blumenauer	Cárdenas
Amash	Bonamici	Carson (IN)
Amodel	Boustany	Carter (GA)
Ashford	Boyle (PA)	Carter (TX)
Babin	Brady (PA)	Cartwright
Barletta	Brat	Castor (FL)
Barr	Bridenstine	Castro (TX)
Barton	Brooks (AL)	Chabot
Bass	Brooks (IN)	Chaffetz
Beatty	Brown (FL)	Chu (CA)
Becerra	Brownley (CA)	Cicilline
Benishhek	Buchanan	Clark (MA)
Bera	Buck	Clarke (NY)
Beyer	Bucshon	Clawson (FL)
Bilirakis	Burgess	Clay
Bishop (GA)	Bustos	Cleaver
Bishop (MI)	Butterfield	Clyburn

Coffman	Himes	Mullin	Thompson (MS)	Velázquez	Whitfield	Hultgren	McNerney	Sensenbrenner
Cole	Hinojosa	Mulvaney	Thompson (PA)	Visclosky	Williams	Hunter	McSally	Serrano
Collins (GA)	Holding	Murphy (PA)	Thornberry	Wagner	Wilson (FL)	Hurd (TX)	Meadows	Sessions
Collins (NY)	Honda	Nadler	Tiberi	Walberg	Wilson (SC)	Hurt (VA)	Meng	Sherman
Comstock	Hoyer	Napolitano	Troyer	Walker	Wittman	Issa	Mica	Shimkus
Conaway	Hudson	Neal	Tonko	Walorski	Womack	Jenkins (WV)	Miller (MI)	Shuster
Connolly	Huelskamp	Neugebauer	Torres	Walters, Mimi	Woodall	Johnson, Sam	Moorenar	Simpson
Conyers	Huffman	Newhouse	Trott	Walz	Yarmuth	Jolly	Mooney (WV)	Sinema
Cook	Huizenga (MI)	Noem	Tsongas	Waters, Maxine	Yoder	Keating	Moulton	Smith (MO)
Cooper	Hultgren	Nolan	Turner	Watson Coleman	Yoho	Kelly (PA)	Mullin	Smith (NE)
Costa	Hunter	Norcross	Upton	Weber (TX)	Young (AK)	Kennedy	Murphy (PA)	Smith (NJ)
Costello (PA)	Hurd (TX)	Nugent	Van Hollen	Webster (FL)	Young (IA)	Kildee	Nadler	Smith (TX)
Courtney	Hurt (VA)	Nunes	Vargas	Welch	Young (IN)	King (IA)	Napolitano	Speier
Cramer	Israel	O'Rourke	Veasey	Wenstrup	Zeldin	King (NY)	Neal	Stefanik
Crawford	Issa	Olson	Vela	Westerman	Zinke	Kline	Neugebauer	Stewart
Crenshaw	Jackson Lee	Palazzo	NOT VOTING—31			Knight	Newhouse	Stutzman
Crowley	Jeffries	Pallone	Bost	Kelly (IL)	Ryan (OH)	Labrador	Noem	Takai
Cuellar	Jenkins (KS)	Palmer	Brady (TX)	Kinzing (IL)	Sánchez, Linda	LaMalfa	Nugent	Takano
Culberson	Jenkins (WV)	Pascarell	Carney	Lee	T.	Lamborn	Nunes	Thornberry
Curbelo (FL)	Johnson (GA)	Paulsen	Cohen	Lynch	Schrader	Larson (CT)	O'Rourke	Tiberi
Davis (CA)	Johnson (OH)	Payne	Cummings	Messer	Smith (WA)	Levin	Olson	Tonko
Davis, Danny	Johnson, E. B.	Pearce	DesJarlais	Murphy (FL)	Titus	Lieu (CA)	Pascarell	Torres
Davis, Rodney	Johnson, Sam	Pelosi	Duckworth	Perlmutter	Valadao	Lipinski	Payne	Trott
DeFazio	Jolly	Perry	Gohmert	Pocan	Walden	Loeb sack	Pingree	Upton
DeGette	Jones	Peters	Hahn	Rogers (AL)	Wasserman	Lofgren	Polis	Van Hollen
Delaney	Jordan	Peterson	Hice (GA)	Roybal-Allard	Schultz	Long	Pompeo	Vela
DeLauro	Joyce	Pingree	Katko	Rush	Westmoreland	Lowey	Posy	Velázquez
DeBene	Kaptur	Pittenger	□ 1909			Rangel	Quigley	Walker
Denham	Keating	Pitts	So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.	The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.			Robyn	Wagner
Dent	Kelly (PA)	Poe (TX)	A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.			Lucas	Rouzer	Westerman
DeSantis	Kennedy	Poliquin	THE JOURNAL			Luetkemeyer	Royce	Whitfield
DeSaulnier	Kildee	Polis	The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.	The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.			Rouzer	Williams
Deutch	Kilmer	Pompeo	This is a 5-minute vote.	The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 257, nays 128, not voting 47, as follows:			Rouzer	Wilson (FL)
Diaz-Balart	Kind	Posy	[Roll No. 19]			MacArthur	Rouzer	Wilson (SC)
Dingell	King (IA)	Price (GA)	YEAS—257			Maloney,	Rouzer	Womack
Doggett	King (NY)	Price (NC)	Abraham	Castro (TX)	Edwards	Carolyn	Rouzer	Yarmuth
Dold	Kirkpatrick	Quigley	Adams	Chabot	Ellison	Marchant	Rouzer	Young (AK)
Doyle (PA)	Kline	Rangel	Aderholt	Chu (CA)	Emmer	Marino	Rouzer	Young (IA)
Duffy	Knight	Ratcliffe	Allen	Cicilline	Engel	Massie	Rouzer	Young (IN)
Duncan (SC)	Kuster	Reed	Amodei	Clark (MA)	Eshoo	McCarthy	Rouzer	Zeldin
Duncan (TN)	Labrador	Reichert	Ashford	Clawson (FL)	Esty	McCaul	Rouzer	Zinke
Edwards	LaMalfa	Renacci	Baretta	Clay	Farr	McClintock	Rouzer	
Ellison	Lamborn	Ribble	Barr	Cleaver	Fattah	McCollum	Rouzer	
Ellmers	Lance	Rice (NY)	Barton	Coffman	Fincher	McDermott	Rouzer	
Emmer	Langevin	Rice (SC)	Beatty	Cole	Fleischmann	McHenry	Rouzer	
Engel	Larsen (WA)	Richmond	Becerra	Collins (NY)	Fortenberry	McKinley	Rouzer	
Eshoo	Larson (CT)	Rigell	Beyer	Comstock	Foster	Meehan	Rouzer	
Esty	Latta	Roby	Bilirakis	Conaway	Frankel (FL)	Miller (FL)	Rouzer	
Farenthold	Lawrence	Roe (TN)	Bishop (GA)	Conyers	Franks (AZ)	Moore	Rouzer	
Farr	Levin	Rogers (KY)	Bishop (UT)	Cook	Frelinghuysen	Mulvaney	Rouzer	
Fattah	Lewis	Rohrabacher	Black	Cooper	Gabbard	Nolan	Rouzer	
Fincher	Lieu (CA)	Rokita	Blackburn	Costello (PA)	Galleo	Palmer	Rouzer	
Fitzpatrick	Lipinski	Rooney (FL)	Blum	Courtney	Garamendi	Paulsen	Rouzer	
Fleischmann	LoBiondo	Ros-Lehtinen	Blumenauer	Cramer	Goodlatte	Pearce	Rouzer	
Fleming	Loeb sack	Roskam	Bonamici	Crawford	Gosar	Pelosi	Rouzer	
Flores	Lofgren	Ross	Boustany	Crenshaw	Gowdy		Rouzer	
Forbes	Long	Rothfus	Brat	Crowley	Graham		Rouzer	
Fortenberry	Loudermilk	Rouzer	Bridenstine	Cuellar	Graves (GA)		Rouzer	
Foster	Love	Royce	Brooks (AL)	Culberson	Grayson		Rouzer	
Fox	Lowenthal	Ruiz	Brooks (IN)	Curbelo (FL)	Grothman		Rouzer	
Frankel (FL)	Lowey	Ruppersberger	Brown (FL)	Davis (CA)	Guthrie		Rouzer	
Franks (AZ)	Lucas	Russell	Buck	Davis, Danny	Gutiérrez		Rouzer	
Frelinghuysen	Luetkemeyer	Ryan (WI)	Bustos	DeGette	Hardy		Rouzer	
Fudge	Lujan Grisham	Salmon	Butterfield	DeLauro	Harper		Rouzer	
Gabbard	(NM)	Sanchez, Loretta	Byrne	DelBene	Hartzer		Rouzer	
Gallego	Luján, Ben Ray	Sanford	Calvert	Dent	Heck (WA)		Rouzer	
Garamendi	(NM)	Sarbanes	Capps	DeSaulnier	Hensarling		Rouzer	
Garrett	Lummis	Scalise	Cárdenas	Deutch	Higgins		Rouzer	
Gibbs	MacArthur	Schakowsky	Carson (IN)	Deutch	Himes		Rouzer	
Gibson	Maloney,	Schiff	Carter (GA)	Doggett	Hinojosa		Rouzer	
Goodlatte	Carolyn	Schock	Cartwright	Doyale (PA)	Huelskamp		Rouzer	
Gosar	Maloney, Sean	Schweikert		Duncan (SC)			Rouzer	
Gowdy	Marchant	Scott (VA)		Duncan (TN)			Rouzer	
Graham	Marino	Scott, Austin					Rouzer	
Granger	Massie	Scott, David					Rouzer	
Graves (GA)	Matsui	Sensenbrenner					Rouzer	
Graves (LA)	McCarthy	Serrano					Rouzer	
Graves (MO)	McCaul	Sessions					Rouzer	
Grayson	McClintock	Sewell (AL)					Rouzer	
Green, Al	McCollum	Sherman					Rouzer	
Green, Gene	McDermott	Shimkus					Rouzer	
Griffith	McGovern	Shuster					Rouzer	
Grijalva	McHenry	Simpson					Rouzer	
Grothman	McKinley	Sinema					Rouzer	
Guinta	McMorris	Sires					Rouzer	
Guthrie	Rodgers	Slaughter					Rouzer	
Gutiérrez	McNerney	Smith (MO)					Rouzer	
Hanna	McSally	Smith (NE)					Rouzer	
Hardy	Meadows	Smith (NJ)					Rouzer	
Harper	Meehan	Smith (TX)					Rouzer	
Harris	Meeks	Speier					Rouzer	
Hartzer	Meng	Stefanik					Rouzer	
Hastings	Mica	Stewart					Rouzer	
Heck (NV)	Miller (FL)	Stivers					Rouzer	
Heck (WA)	Miller (MI)	Stutzman					Rouzer	
Hensarling	Moorenar	Swalwell (CA)					Rouzer	
Herrera Beutler	Mooney (WV)	Takai					Rouzer	
Higgins	Moore	Takano					Rouzer	
Hill	Moulton	Thompson (CA)					Rouzer	

NOT VOTING—47

Dingell	Larsen (WA)	Ryan (OH)
Duckworth	Lawrence	Sánchez, Linda
Gohmert	Lee	T.
Granger	Lynch	Schrader
Graves (LA)	Meeks	Scott, Austin
Grijalva	Messer	Smith (WA)
Hahn	Murphy (FL)	Titus
Hice (GA)	Perlmutter	Tsongas
Huffman	Pitts	Valadao
Johnson (GA)	Pocan	Walden
Joyce	Price (NC)	Wasserman
Kaptur	Rogers (AL)	Schultz
Katko	Rokita	Westmoreland
Kelly (IL)	Roybal-Allard	
Kinzinger (IL)	Rush	

□ 1916

Mr. HILL changed his vote from "yea" to "nay."

So the Journal was approved.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AUTHORIZING USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL FOR CEREMONY TO PRESENT CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO FIRST SPECIAL SERVICE FORCE

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table (S. Con. Res. 2) authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for a ceremony to present the Congressional Gold Medal to the First Special Service Force, in recognition of its superior service during World War II, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

S. CON. RES. 2

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring),

SECTION 1. USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL FOR CEREMONY TO PRESENT CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO FIRST SPECIAL SERVICE FORCE.

Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center is authorized to be used on February 3, 2015, for a ceremony to present the Congressional Gold Medal to the First Special Service Force collectively, in recognition of its superior service during World War II. Physical preparations for the conduct of the ceremony shall be carried out in accordance with such conditions as the Architect of the Capitol may prescribe.

The concurrent resolution was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR A JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS TO RECEIVE A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I send to the desk a privileged concurrent resolution and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 7

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the two Houses of

Congress assemble in the Hall of the House of Representatives on Tuesday, January 20, 2015, at 9 p.m., for the purpose of receiving such communication as the President of the United States shall be pleased to make to them.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 217

Mrs. BLACK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Representative ADAM SMITH be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 217. He was inadvertently added through a clerical error and did not intend to cosponsor the legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Tennessee?

There was no objection.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF JOE STRICKLAND

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of our own, Joe Strickland, the Chief Reporter of Debates, on his retirement from the House after more than 21 years of service.

Joe Strickland is a native Texan. He came to the House in 1993, 2 years after graduating from court reporting school. He quickly distinguished himself not only as an excellent court reporter but as a very capable manager. In 2000, the Clerk of the House promoted Joe to Deputy Chief Reporter and made him Chief in 2005.

Joe has participated in seven State of the Union addresses by three Presidents, and he has developed a global reputation as a leader in reporting parliamentary debates.

Joe has represented the House abroad on several occasions, Mr. Speaker, including participating in the World e-Parliament Conference in Johannesburg.

Here at home, Joe has addressed the national convention of the National Court Reporters Association three times, and he has served on the board of the Greater Washington Shorthand Reporters Association.

Mr. Speaker, the House has lost a great resource and role model for the 43 dedicated professionals Joe manages. One of the reporters, of course, is on the floor reporting this now, and we thank her, and we thank all of those who have to listen to us and report what we say. That is a tough job. But I know that Joe will continue to inspire those who serve in the reporting office.

I join, and I know all of my colleagues join, in honoring Joe Strickland, thanking him for his service to this House. We wish him a very happy retirement, full of time spent with his husband, Tom, and their son, Kevin. I thank him for his service to the Congress and to our country.

PLACATING THE COMMUNIST REGIME OF CUBA

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, it is truly astonishing that President Obama is asking Congress and the American people to applaud and reward the Castro regime for releasing 53 innocent people from its gulags today while ignoring the fact that over 1,000 were arrested last year.

These individuals were imprisoned for expressing their basic rights as human beings, and for seeking reforms on the island based on the universal and fundamental principle of freedom.

What a pathetically low bar President Obama has set. This administration has shown, time and again, that it is more willing to appease tyrants than to fulfill America's role as the defender of freedom, of democracy, and respect for human rights.

President Obama's concessions to the Castro regime further illustrate that he is willing to abandon American core principles of liberty and justice in order to placate a dangerous regime.

AMERICANS MOURN WITH THE PEOPLE OF PARIS

(Mr. SWALWELL of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, today we mourn with the people of Paris. Americans stand with Paris and attacks on innocent people everywhere across the world.

Terrorists are escalating their attacks on innocent people across the world as we speak. Americans here at home are rightfully concerned, and to protect them, they look to us, their lawmakers.

Our greatest responsibility, above everything else we ever do, prescribed to us in the Constitution, is to keep people safe in their homes and in their country.

As security measures go up in our country to keep us safe, unfortunately, House GOP leaders are proposing to shut the Department of Homeland Security down. We cannot play politics with our national security.

I urge my House GOP colleagues to stand up for security and not shut down the government. Let's put the safety of the American people first and put petty politics aside. Now is the time that we stand strong for the security of everyone.

SECURING AMERICA'S BORDERS

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to discuss work in the House to secure our borders and address the Obama administration's unilateral actions on immigration.

This week, the House will consider the 2015 Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill, which takes a number of steps to bolster border security and law enforcement efforts.

To start, the legislation provides for the largest operational force levels in the history of the Customs and Border Protection agency. The measure also supports several critical border security initiatives, including around-the-clock surveillance of air, land, and sea approaches to the border.

Furthermore, the legislation boosts internal enforcement efforts and strengthens related domestic and international investigations.

Finally, the legislation will provide for the amendments that will stop the President's executive actions on immigration.

Mr. Speaker, the President's unilateral executive orders should be of concern to each and every Member of this body. I call on colleagues from both sides of the aisle to do what is right—support this legislative package. It protects the borders, it restores the rule of law. The American people deserve as much.

THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS BILL

(Mr. KENNEDY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening in opposition to the House Republican plan to tear apart millions of families through extreme amendments to the Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill.

In the face of inaction by this House last year, our President was forced to use his constitutional authority to bring millions of our neighbors out of the shadows to fix a broken immigration system.

Through scrapping the Secure Communities Program and ensuring that parents of American citizens could no longer live in fear of deportation, the President's executive order has moved our country forward. However, it is no substitute for the bipartisan congressional action that the majority of the American people feel that we need and that passed the Senate 2 years ago.

By undermining the President's executive actions through amendments to DHS appropriations, my colleagues are not only jeopardizing critical funding for our Nation's security but also ignoring the pain and suffering they will cause to millions across our country.

IT IS COOL TO BE FROM NORTH DAKOTA

(Mr. CRAMER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, Aristotle said, "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit."

Mr. Speaker, this weekend, the North Dakota State University Bison football team was in Frisco, Texas, attempting to win their fourth consecutive NCAA Division I FCS national title.

After a long stampede with a talented flock of Illinois State Redbirds hot on their tail, they finally ended up in the end zone. The only ones in the winner's circle were the Thundering Herd.

The seniors finished their careers with more national championships, Mr. Speaker, than losses. I am especially proud of the boys from North Dakota.

Bismarck Century's Carson Wentz earned MVP status by quarterbacking his team to success, and BHS' Esley Thornton sealed the deal with a last-minute interception.

All of the teammates from the Rough Rider State and beyond, you have made us proud again, and you remind us why it is so cool to be from North Dakota.

□ 1930

AN ANTI-IMMIGRANT CANCER

(Mr. JEFFRIES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to represent one of the most diverse districts in the entire Congress. Approximately 33 percent of the people whom I represent were born outside of the United States of America. Folks from all over the world come to Brooklyn and to Queens to pursue the American Dream. This is part of what makes America great; yet there is an anti-immigrant cancer spreading in this town that is moving like a malignant tumor amongst some on the other side of the aisle.

As a result of this invidious infliction, there are some in the House GOP who are prepared to shut down the Department of Homeland Security, even though America continues to be a top target for terrorists all across the world.

This is shameful. This is reckless. This is irresponsible. The American people need to rise up to stop it from happening.

NORMALIZING U.S. RELATIONS WITH CUBA

(Mr. RANGEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I was in Havana, Cuba, when the President of the United States declared that he was going to relax the restrictions that we

have on the embargo in Cuba, and I tell you that the people in Havana rejoiced. In the streets of Havana, they said there were two basic things they liked about America: one was American movies, and the second was everything else.

When I got to come back home through Miami, at the airport, people with Cuban backgrounds—Americans—were so excited about the opportunity for America to rejoin the family of nations and to recognize the contributions that Cuba can make. We thought that, today, we would be hearing a rejoicing for those people who should have never been in jail in Cuba who were released. Obviously, there are some people who have a different opinion.

I am here today to say that, with all due respect to those Americans and to those Cubans who suffer under the dictatorship in Cuba, we feel their pain, but now, American policy should override the pain that a few feel for what is in the best national interest of our great Nation.

A HOUSE OF GAMES

(Mr. YARMUTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of games being played at this time of year. Tonight, we are going to have a national championship game for the NCAA national football championship, playoff games for the NFL championship. We have basketball games being played and hockey games. The American people don't need games being played in the House of Representatives, but that is exactly what we are seeing this week.

The Republican majority is holding hostage the security of this Nation—holding the Department of Homeland Security's budget hostage—so they can advance some ideological provisions on immigration reform.

This is nothing but a big pout on the part of the Republican majority because they are upset with the President's executive action. If they want to undo what the President has done and proceed toward a sane immigration policy, we have an entire body of Democrats and Republicans who is waiting to do that. I was part of the bipartisan group last year that worked for the entire Congress in trying to get that done. I know it is possible.

No more games, Mr. Speaker. We need action—we need sane action—and not holding our national security hostage.

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE OF MARIO CUOMO

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BUCK). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, as the senior member of the New York delegation, it affords me a great honor to come from the Empire State of New York, where we have so many people we are proud of, but because Mario Cuomo represented the true nature of the American Dream, we from the State of New York would just like to laud the contributions that he has made, not just to Queens, where he was raised, not just to the great State of New York, but to those democratic principles that all of us believe in, and no one could articulate it the way our great Governor has.

So many people have come to this country from faraway places, and somehow, when they succeed, some change their names, some change their attitudes, and some just absolutely forget how they got here and how they were perceived; but Mario Cuomo was different.

Mario was so proud of the fact that his parents were immigrants. He was proud of the fact that they came here with nothing but a hope and a dream that their son would succeed. He succeeded in everything that he touched, from neighborhood arbitration, to secretary of state, to Lieutenant Governor; and, of course, the Nation remembers him as Governor and as one who articulated the principles not of the Democratic Party, but of the entire country at a Democratic Convention.

Of course, he leaves behind a son who, for those of us who attended his funeral would have to say not only did he talk about his father in terms that made us all feel proud, but in that voice that he had, if you closed your eyes for one moment, you would see that Mario Cuomo did not die. He left his son to continue in describing the great opportunity that we have in this great country.

I am so glad that so many New Yorkers are here. Because we are here for such a short period of time—we are in committees and reorganizing—the delegation has asked me to reduce my remarks to 2 minutes, and I share that concern with the rest of our great delegation.

It is my great pleasure to yield back the balance of my time so that the gentleman from New York, JOSEPH CROWLEY, may control the remainder of my time.

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE OF MARIO CUOMO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the minority leader of the House.

Ms. PELOSI. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I thank the distinguished member and longest-serving member—I don't

want to say "senior member"—in the New York delegation for getting us off to a start to sing the praises of Mario Cuomo. It is my honor to join the New York delegation. I feel honored to do so. Four of our children were born in New York, so that gives me some standing on the subject.

Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor to join the New York delegation in paying tribute to the memory of Governor Mario Cuomo. I am reminded of Ecclesiasticus. We all know this, but just think of how appropriate it is for Mario Cuomo.

In Ecclesiasticus, it says:

Now let us praise great men, the heroes of our Nation.

They led the people by their counsel and their knowledge of the laws. From their font of wisdom, they gave instruction.

These are godly men whose righteous deeds have not been forgotten. Their wealth is their descendants, and their inheritance is their children's children. Their bodies are buried in peace, and their names will live forever.

The people will tell of their wisdom, and the congregation will continue to sing their praise.

Does that remind you of Mario Cuomo? Is that perfectly appropriate for him? Surely, those words apply to the life and legacy of our great departed friend, Mario.

As a fellow Italian American, I have always taken great pride in his leadership. As a San Franciscan who hosted the Democratic Convention, we in California had some kind of claim on Mario Cuomo because of the great speech that he made at that convention which Mr. RANGEL referenced, but my observing of his greatness goes farther back than that.

It was during a trip to Italy that we were invited by President Carter in 1980 to bring the sympathy and support of the American people to Italy at the time of the earthquake, when they lost 2,700 lives and which left 265,000 people homeless. I mention that because we went by helicopter from village to village to village. Villages were devastated.

Mario Cuomo, here was this person who had such a large spirit and a good soul, who could sympathize with these people in English and Italian. For example, in a village where a First Communion class was rehearsing for First Communion, all of the 7-year-olds in that village were in that church when the earthquake hit. The roof came down, and every 7-year-old in the village was lost.

Imagine the grief of those individual families and of that community to lose those children, but as you would expect, he was up to the task, knowing that words were completely inadequate and that no sympathy could meet the pain that they were feeling; nonetheless, there was this beautiful, sympathetic man identifying with these people from a region from which his family had come in southern Italy.

Mario Cuomo was a pillar of strength through his community, his State, and

our Nation. His values, his vision, and his effectiveness for the people of New York were an inspiration around the world. He was a man of principle and eloquence—that was good—and all the world saw, again, that manifested in the "shining city on a hill" speech at the 1984 Democratic Convention.

With those soaring words, Governor Cuomo summoned the best of America and called us to empower the working people and middle class families who are the backbone of our Nation. He asked us to remember how futures are built. We know Mario Cuomo's language and leadership will echo through the ages just as vital, just as urgent, just as energizing as his words were that day.

In word and deed, Governor Cuomo challenged us to make real the American Dream. He had it for his family. He wanted it for everyone else, for all who strived to realize it, and opened the doors of opportunity for every American family.

Family meant everything to him. He was a proud Governor of New York for three terms, but his proudest achievement was his beautiful family. No one could miss the pride and inspiration he found in his immigrant parents and how he talked about them so beautifully or in his boundless dedication to Matilda and his children.

Our country has lost a great leader, but his family has lost a devoted husband to his wife of over 60 years, to Matilda. He was a loving father to five children—Margaret, Andrew, Maria, Madeline, and Christopher—and was a doting grandfather to some really lovely grandchildren.

My husband, Paul, and I and our entire family are heartbroken. We are really heartbroken by his passing, and we continue to extend our deepest sympathy and love to Matilda and their family.

I hope it is a comfort to them that so many people in their own State, in the country, and, really, throughout the world mourn their loss and continue to pray for them and continue to be inspired by this great man.

As Ecclesiasticus says:

People will tell of his wisdom, and the congregation will continue to sing his praise.

I thank Mr. CROWLEY for yielding. I thank him for bringing us together to sing the praises of Mario Cuomo.

Mr. CROWLEY. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Rochester, New York, LOUISE SLAUGHTER.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I thank Mr. CROWLEY for yielding to me. There is so much on my mind as to what I could say about him.

I knew him longer than the rest of the New Yorkers. I met him in 1973. I was a member of the Democratic State committee in Rochester, New York, and I was asked by the district attorney to come over to his house and meet a man from New York City who was thinking about running for Governor; so I joined my friends and sat in the

living room for about an hour, awaiting the guest from New York to get off the telephone in the kitchen and come out and talk to us.

He came out. He was perfectly charming, but he didn't know upstate New York. He started by telling us: "A lot of people are talking to me about running for Governor, and I thought it would be a good idea if I came up here to see what all of you thought."

I left the house that night, and I said to my friend that I was driving with: "He is really a nice guy, and he is very smart, but, boy, he needs a lot of help." I was really pretty lucky, I think, that I got to do that. As it turns out, Governor Carey ran for Governor at that time, and Mr. Cuomo was appointed secretary of state.

He had some great ideas for upstate New York. One of them was they were going to have an upstate coordinator, which is kind of an amorphous title, but I was very blessed that he let me try that job. I had been out of the workforce. I was home. My youngest child was about 12 years old. It was back in the day when one income could bring up a family and educate them.

□ 1945

And so trying to get back into work and to get back into all of that was pretty difficult for me. And I am not sure anybody else would have put up with me, other than Mario Cuomo, giving me every opportunity in the world to try to learn what it is we were trying to do.

But, boy, did I ever teach him a few things. We had an old State car, a rattletrap. I drove him all over upstate New York, and the conversations we had would absolutely astound you.

We stopped one day in one of our beautiful rural villages in upstate named Pavilion to get a cup of coffee. And a 16-year-old girl came out to wait on us. And here he was: a new person to speak to. Now, those of you who knew him know how exciting that would be. And he started in by asking her, What was the main business in Pavilion? What was the gross domestic product there? He was asking her all these questions. And all she wanted to do was get him a cup of coffee. And I felt a little sorry for her, so I said, "He is the secretary of state." Unfortunately, I forgot the part to say secretary of state of New York. She went back into the kitchen, knowing this man was not Henry Kissinger, and never came back out.

And as we rode around in this old red car, he would ask me about the cornfields. And I will tell you, if my agriculture people knew what a botch I made of trying to explain to him the life of the cornstalk, it was really awful. And he would say things like, How do they heat that house over there? What do you think they do? Where do they all go to school? Everything in the world interested him.

He was the most extraordinary teacher that I have ever had. I just had

those 2 years of showing him upstate New York. And then when he got elected lieutenant governor—I ran that upstate campaign—the State Police took over. But we still carried on all these great conversations we had. And I remember one of the policemen said once that no matter how upset Mario was, when he got off the plane and would go 10 miles or 10 rounds with Louise, they were off on a whole other subject.

I learned so much from him. And I know that everybody thinks of him as a one-speech maker sort of a—but let me tell you, that was not it. The speech that he made at Notre Dame was so incredibly wonderful and so important and so instructive that everybody should read that as well. But one of my very favorites was when he made his speech about my hometown of Rochester on Lake Ontario.

He described Rochester as a necklace of neighborhoods clustered around the lake. Now that is talking. And he also talked about life, that our life needed to be more than to just hope always to land on the safe squares. And we thought that was such an incredible thing to think about, that your life had to have more meaning than that.

The people that we worked with at the secretary of state's office who were holdovers from the previous administration had said to me many, many times how wonderful it was for them to be able to work for such a first-rate lawyer. And believe me, he really was.

He loved the country, as NANCY PELOSI pointed out. His love of his family was absolutely legendary. He was a man of deep conviction, of religious faith, who loved his family more than anything. But he also loved the great opportunity that this country had given to him.

He talked so admiringly of his father and the strength that his father and mother had, coming here with literally nothing. And it was the manual labor that his father did to lift himself up and, consequently, his family to a better life, and the country.

He loved New York. He loved its people. He loved its history more than anything. He loved the institution of governing.

So I speak of him as somebody that maybe other people didn't get to know the way I did, but I admired him always. And I am pretty sure I would not be in elected office at all had I not had the opportunity to learn from him, the wonderful opportunity to represent our neighbors and to come down and to try to make law and to make some changes.

So I thank you very much for the time, Mr. CROWLEY. We will not see his like again.

Mr. CROWLEY. I thank the gentlelady.

I now yield to the gentleman from the Bronx, Mr. SERRANO.

(Mr. SERRANO asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SERRANO. I thank my colleague, Mr. CROWLEY.

This week in 1975, I became a member of the New York State Assembly. This week in 1975, Mario Cuomo became secretary of state. I left to come to Congress in 1990, so I am fortunate to have served in the legislature 16 of the 20 years that he served in the executive branch.

And in 1983, when I became chairman of the Education Committee, I really got to know him and to speak to him and to understand what everyone that has spoken has already said. Above all, this man never forgot, and he understood how important it was for him to be the son of an immigrant family. So he wanted everyone else to have the same opportunity.

Yes, he was eloquent. Yes, he had to be a great human being—after all, he was a minor league baseball player and was signed by the Pittsburgh Pirates, I believe, to play ball, that alone makes him a great guy. But he was an eloquent man who also remembered his humble beginnings in the grocery store, having to work to get through law school, to be able to understand.

So when I stood in front of him as one who had been born an American citizen—but a lot of people forgot along the way that we were and treated us in a different way—he understood. There was that simpatico that he had with him, where he understood where we came from and what we needed. And I am just so honored to have served all those years with Mario Cuomo and to have considered him a friend.

When I went to his funeral, Matilda was just so gracious because she wrote a book once where she asked people to write about who had influenced them. And I wrote about a certain gentleman in the Bronx who had played major role in my starting my public career. And she remembered that.

And I, once again, offer my condolences to the Cuomo family.

But we should not feel sorry that he is gone. We have been blessed with the fact that he lived among us. And for me, 16 of those 20 years, I learned so much from him, and hopefully I was able to help him along the way at times too.

Mr. CROWLEY. I thank my friend from the Bronx.

And I yield to the gentleman from Manhattan, Mr. NADLER.

Mr. NADLER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I too came to the legislature and served for 16 years there. And for most of that time, Mario Cuomo was Governor.

We all know that he was an eloquent philosopher in politics, someone who could express the goals and the principles of public office and of government more eloquently than almost anyone else.

Mario Cuomo graduated first in his class from St. John's Law School in 1946. And despite sending out over 70 resumes, he couldn't get a response or an interview from a top law firm because he was Italian. And that was the

state of prejudice in this country—or at least on Wall Street in 1946.

He went on from there to become a major lawyer, to become the Governor of a State, to become a leader of a philosophy in American politics. But in doing so, he never forgot where he came from. He didn't forget his experiences, and he knew that other people were having similar experiences.

He was a man of great principle. He vetoed the death penalty—though he knew that the death penalty was very popular in New York—12 times in a row, and he sustained those vetoes. Having not forgotten where he came from, he always wanted to use government to help defenseless people who needed the help of government, and he did.

We all know many of the things he did. I am not going to repeat them here. But I want to just mention a couple of things that didn't get great publicity but that I saw as a member of the legislature.

When he became Governor, he set up a commission. I forget the exact title—Commission on Child Support, Commission on Day Care, whatever it was. But every year for years, that commission came up with legislation which he supported and pushed, and some of us in the legislature worked on that. And he passed—we passed pioneering legislation, pioneering in this country on child support enforcement, which was considered a radical idea in the early 1980s. We passed the Child Support Standards Act so that judges couldn't leave women and their children without adequate support. He passed day care resource and referral legislation and family day care, all of which came from the initiatives of Governor Cuomo, none of which got a lot of publicity, which was focused on so-called bigger items. But these helped people. These were vital for people living their lives without a lot of money, without a lot of resources. But government became a helper and a friend because of Governor Cuomo.

Mr. CROWLEY. Thank you, Mr. NADLER.

I now yield to the gentlelady from Brooklyn, Queens, and Manhattan, Ms. NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a leader who inspired not only New Yorkers but who also captured the imagination of progressives across the Nation. At a time when our national dialogue was dominated by those seeking to leave working families to fend for themselves, Governor Cuomo outlined a different vision. Through his policies as Governor and his evocative speaking abilities, he articulated our moral obligation to care for one another while working toward a society that benefits all Americans, not only the affluent and powerful.

All of us remember his famous words from the Democratic convention in San Francisco. Questioning conservatives'

rose-colored view of the Nation, he noted we were becoming too much a "tale of two cities," rather than a "shining city on a hill." That speech crystallized the differences in competing philosophies between those who believe Americans can do more to help one another and those who think our Nation has already reached its greatest heights and cannot further improve.

However, just as he was serving as an intellectual lodestar for progressive and liberals nationally, Mario Cuomo remained dedicated to improving New Yorkers' lives. A son of Queens, in many ways, he reflected the aspirations and dreams of that borough's residents. Today, Queens is where families of all backgrounds—Latinos, Asian, Italian, and Greek immigrants—converge to secure a decent, affordable place to live.

In today's political landscape, we could all benefit from remembering those words. In today's cynical environment, many have forgotten the tremendous good our government can achieve in pursuing justice, creating opportunity, and caring for neighbors in need.

Governor Cuomo made many contributions, but that may be among his most important. He provided the intellectual framework to remind us that we have more to do, that our Nation can be better, and that we cannot afford to leave our fellow New Yorkers and Americans behind.

For ensuring these ideas remain part of our national conversation, all of us owe him a debt and all of us appreciate his decades of steadfast service.

I send my thoughts and my prayers to his family, including his son, Governor Andrew Cuomo. I hope they can take comfort in knowing that all of us join in mourning with them.

□ 2000

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlelady from Brooklyn, Queens, and Manhattan. I now yield to the gentlelady from Queens and Manhattan and Brooklyn, Mrs. CAROLYN MALONEY.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his leadership in so many ways, and I thank the leader of the Democratic Party for leading us in this tribute to our great Governor. We appreciate very much your presence and support of Mario Cuomo on the floor.

It seems only fitting and proper for us to pay tribute to the late Mario Cuomo here in this historic Chamber, here where some of the most powerful and eloquent speakers in our Nation's history have changed the course of human events, not with swords but with words and ideas.

Mario Cuomo, the former Governor of New York, the liberal lion of the Empire State, the conscience of the Democratic Party, and a cherished friend, had few peers when it came to making the power of ideas and ideals irresistible forces for good.

His faith, his passion, his values, and his unique gifts produced in him an unrivaled ability to articulate the plight, defend the rights, and engage the hopes of ordinary citizens.

I had the great fortune to be a delegate when he gave one of the most storied speeches at the National Democratic Convention in 1984. I will never forget it. When Mario Cuomo spoke, it electrified the whole convention. We were transfixed by the power of his appeal right to the deepest reaches of our common humanity.

He made all of us feel like we needed to do more, work harder, and help others because that is what really came through when Mario Cuomo spoke: his deep, unwavering commitment to fundamental decency, justice, and humanity.

He spoke to a sitting President on behalf of the forgotten and the dispossessed. He spoke to the powerful on behalf of the powerless. "There is despair," he said, "in the faces you don't see and the places you don't visit."

Mario Cuomo was right. He spent his life working and looking out for the hardworking people who build our shining cities, who supply our food, who teach our children, who staff our hospitals, people who are too often overlooked, overlooked, and underserved.

His own family had owned a store in Jamaica, Queens, and he knew full well the value of hard work and of education. He lived the American Dream and spent his life trying to build the American Dream for others. Mario Cuomo worked his way into St. John's University. He attended St. John's University School of Law in New York and graduated first in his class.

He first rose to public attention when he came roaring out of Queens back in the 1970s to challenge city hall's condemnation of a working class neighborhood in Corona. People quickly began to appreciate that Mario Cuomo had the transformative power to inspire others to demand for themselves a more just and humane society and a better government. He insisted that representative government should be just that: a government for all the people.

Whenever he was on the ballot—and I remember as an active Democrat then—Democrat registration went up because everybody wanted to vote for and help elect Mario Cuomo. They knew he would do everything in his power to give them a fair shake.

He once told me—and I always had these terrible elections. He would always tell me that he was my fairy godfather, and he would grant me three wishes to win the election, but only on one condition, that I would go out and grant three wishes to someone else and help them do a better job in what they wanted to do.

He was a wonderful friend and a mentor, a husband, a wonderful father. As a parent, there is no question he did a remarkable job. One son is a Governor, another is a news anchor, one daughter

is a physician, another active in continuing the family work in housing the homeless, and another is an attorney. If that was all that he ever did, that would be plenty for one lifetime.

Mario Cuomo did much more. He was secretary of state of the great State of New York, then Lieutenant Governor, and finally Governor for three terms. He led New York to provide health care for children. He began the Decade of the Child, an effort that used multiple health care and educational strategies to better the lives of our most vulnerable. He passed the child support enforcement bill.

Under his leadership, the most intense public health plan in the Nation was put in place to take on the AIDS epidemic. Under Mario Cuomo, New York State became the first State in the Nation to enact a seatbelt law. He was a great man, and I am proud beyond all telling to be able to say that he was a friend, a mentor, and a supporter.

I grieve his passing, and I send my most heartfelt condolences to his family and his friends. I shall miss the singular and remarkable man until the end of time. To know him was to love him.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I now yield to the gentleman from Queens and part of Nassau, Mr. MEEKS.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

When I think of Governor Mario Cuomo, many talk about his great oratory, many talk about some of the fantastic speeches that he made, but when I think about Mario Cuomo, he didn't just talk the talk; he walked the walk.

His speeches were not made just because it was a political gathering or forum. His speeches were made because that is what he truly believed. It came from his heart. It is how he lived his life, and you could see that in how he dealt with his family because that was his foundation.

From that foundation, he was able to build—and starting with that little place in Jamaica, Queens, that I am now proud to represent, he looked at Queens and then, by extension, the city of New York and then, by extension, the State of New York as the foundation of which he could make a difference, learning from his growing up with his parents.

As a result, you found individuals falling in love with Mario Cuomo, and you could see that by the people that were around him who became completely loyal to him because he had a real great leadership.

Once you became infected with the spirit of Mario Cuomo, you continued to stay around him, and you would see in the visuals who were with Mario Cuomo until the day that he died folks loyal to him. In this business in this day and age, sometimes, if you don't have that kind of character, people come, and people go.

Lastly, because I know that we have got so many members of the New York

delegation that are here that want to speak, let me just say that he was competitive. I can think about those days when—I thank him first because he talked about getting into politics, he allowed me to cut my teeth by appointing me first to the New York State Workers' Compensation Board as a judge, then later appointed me to become the supervising judge in the State, having me going all over the State, and then encouraging me to run for the State assembly and, once I got elected to the State assembly, working very closely with him.

Once I got into the assembly, I thought he was a nice guy until you got on the basketball court. How competitive was he on that basketball court? Elbows—I look at some of the players now when they are complaining, et cetera, well, you need to go play old school basketball with Governor Mario Cuomo.

I close by saying that I thank God—because he was a very religious man, Mario Cuomo, too, but God could have sent him to California; he didn't. He could have had him in Illinois or in Texas or in Florida; no.

We were fortunate because God had him, through his parents, who emigrated from Italy to come to a place where the Statue of Liberty was, who believed "Give me your tired, give me your weary," who believed in family, and we had him in the great State of New York.

Thank you, Governor Mario Cuomo.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend.

I now yield to the gentleman from Buffalo, New York (Mr. HIGGINS). Mario Cuomo was known all over New York State, obviously, as the Governor, but my colleague BRIAN HIGGINS knew him well.

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, along with my colleagues, to honor the life and legacy of Governor Mario Cuomo who passed away on January 1 at the age of 82.

When we think of Governor Cuomo, we think of him along with his son—now Governor Andrew Cuomo—and then his counsel Tim Russert from Buffalo driving in a car, riding from the airport to the Moscone Center in San Francisco, still writing new sections of his historic keynote address at the 1984 Democratic National Convention which catapulted him forever as a prominent figure within the Democratic Party.

Less remembered than his speeches but just as admirable were his writings. He wrote extensively on the American Dream his immigrant parents achieved, and the numerous causes that he cared about, "Diaries of Mario M. Cuomo," "Reason to Believe," "Why Lincoln Matters," and "More Than Words," which is a collection of 31 speeches he wrote going back to 1974.

As a student of government, a teacher of government, and now as a practitioner, in 2006, I went to see Governor Cuomo, former Governor Cuomo, who

was practicing law in Manhattan at a place called Willkie, Farr, and Gallagher. Remember, I had 15 minutes scheduled with him and left 2 hours later. I told him that his writings, going back to 1974, were as relevant today as they were when they were written. They were timeless; they were classics.

My favorite story is the one that he told about how he came to edit the book, "Lincoln on Democracy." In 1988, Governor Cuomo met in Albany with a delegation from the teacher section of Poland's Solidarity Union, which was the leading advocate for bringing democracy to Poland when it was under Communist rule.

The teachers told the Governor that they were building an archive of influential and insightful writings on democracy. They asked if he could recommend writings by American thinkers that had influenced his approach to public service and democracy. Cuomo immediately identified Abraham Lincoln as his favorite source of wisdom.

The Polish delegation said, "Governor, Lincoln's writings and speeches are not available in Poland." In fact, they were banned. Cuomo promised to give them the speeches that they needed in order to appreciate what he had come to appreciate in Lincoln.

Cuomo says, "Delegation, come over here." He pulled out the 378-page index of the collected works of Abraham Lincoln—not one mention of democracy in those works; so together with Lincoln scholar Harold Holzer, he wrote, edited, and published "Lincoln on Democracy," a book that to this day is essential reading for anyone wishing to understand the uniquely American approach to democracy and governance. True to his word, the Polish version of the book appeared in Warsaw in early 1990 before its English version was available in the United States.

Mario Cuomo's gift was that he forced us to think for ourselves. He forced us to consider our history, and he forced us to recognize our responsibility to build a foundation that is better than the foundation that those who came before us built for us.

That is the true meaning of the American Dream, and it was embodied by a unique individual who was an unlikely successful lawyer, an unlikely Governor of New York, Mario M. Cuomo.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments on Governor Cuomo. I now yield to my colleague and friend from the upstate region, Mr. PAUL TONKO, who also served in the State assembly while Mario Cuomo was Governor.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Queens, State of New York, for the opportunity to share some thoughts here this evening with our leader, NANCY PELOSI, and members of the New York delegation, as we pay tribute to the life of Mario Matthew Cuomo, the greatest of Governors in New York, and certainly a true

statesman, a bold and great individual, a humble giant, and a roaring voice, a lion voice for social, economic, and environmental justice.

This evening, what I recall about the life of Mario Cuomo is that as I entered the New York State Assembly in 1983, that was the same year that he entered into the office of Governor, and for my first 12 years of service in the New York State Assembly, it was guided and nurtured and impacted by the strength and the passion of Mario Cuomo.

□ 2015

The walk with him and with Matilda Raffa Cuomo as a first couple of New York was a joyous one but a challenging one to pay tribute to the greatness, the foundation of family, and the passion of immigrants. Those two guiding dynamics drove the principles, the integrity, and the message of Mario Cuomo.

As a member of his upstate cabinet informing and alerting the Governor to various strengths, vitalities, contributions, and history of upstate New York, we were able to connect in a very meaningful way; the work with him very deliberate and very challenging. I will forever be grateful for the learning curve that was developed by working alongside this person of greatness.

I think, also, we need to understand that, as his son Governor Andrew Cuomo eulogized at his funeral service, he made mention very deliberately, Mario Cuomo would not offer, render his words of speeches to an audience telling them what they choose to hear but, rather, what he needed to share. That, I think, speaks to the humble greatness of this individual, one who had a vision not only for his State, but for his country and, for that matter, the world.

I was also touched by the Governor's sharing about his dad, the eloquence of his speech, the eloquence of his speaking, his public speaking that reached so many people throughout the world. He talked about those words and put it into an analogy of a fine bit of jewelry where each word seen as a gem would be deliberately chosen, strategically placed, and majestically clustered in a way where that array would reach our senses, would speak to our senses about what is correct, what is socially just and morally sound. That is true leadership. And it is no wonder through that speech in San Francisco that he lit within the minds, hearts, and souls of Americans the best within us, how we could assume this level of greatness by understanding that we are at our best when we incorporate in an inclusive set of principles in our world of politics.

Mario Cuomo impacted all of us, myself included, by his reverence for his parents' journey as immigrants. That journey, which was a pathway to freedom, that journey which settled into a grocery store, a corner grocery store, became the pulse of the American Dream for his family that was tethered

into this country called the United States of America. He never forgot that. He revered it. He was guided by it. The light that he brought to his field of politics was immense, and it was driven by fairness and inclusion.

So this evening, it is an honor to join with my colleagues to speak to a humble man, a great individual, who, with his wife alongside him, Matilda, brought to this State of New York a sense of hope when there was despair.

As was said at the funeral, he will continue to live. His voice may have been silenced, but his integrity, his spirit, and his principles will long live in the lives of those who struggle and reach to America, to her government, for a better tomorrow.

May he rest in peace.

Mr. CROWLEY. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I ask the gentleman from Brooklyn and from Queens, Mr. JEFFRIES, for his comments.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank my good friend, the distinguished gentleman from Queens, for anchoring this Special Order hour and for yielding a few moments for me to reflect on the passing of our great Governor, Mario Cuomo.

Mr. Speaker, like many other members of the New York delegation, I also served in the New York State Assembly. But unlike most, I didn't get the opportunity to serve alongside Governor Mario Cuomo. I arrived several years after he had completed his three terms in office.

So I speak today not from the perspective of someone who served in government alongside Mario Cuomo, but as a young man who grew up in Mario Cuomo's New York. What an opportunity to be able to come of age in the 1980s with a Governor, a leader, who articulated such an eloquent vision of equal protection under the law for everyone. What an opportunity to be able to come of age under a Governor who believed in opportunity for everyone, who recognized that New York State's greatest strength was our diversity from every community, every perspective, and every religious background.

It was great to be able to come of age and look up at a Governor who, notwithstanding the political potential pitfalls, stood on principle, was ahead of his time as it relates to his firm opposition to the death penalty at a time when that was not a popular position to take. He was a great leader, a charismatic intellectual, a wonderful family man, a tremendous lawyer, and a wonderful statesman and Governor.

I can only imagine that when Mario Cuomo arrived up in Heaven he was prepared to get to work. But I think that there was probably a greeting committee that was there at the gates of Heaven, one of whom was FDR, a former Governor of the State of New York, the other of whom was FDR's cousin, Teddy Roosevelt, two former great Governors of the State of New York. And I think they probably ushered

Mario Cuomo to a place in front of the throne of glory where Almighty God Himself may have said to Governor Cuomo:

Listen, you can take your suit off and put this robe on. Governor Cuomo, you can rest now. You have been faithful over a few things. You can rest now. Well done, My good and faithful servant, well done.

Mr. CROWLEY. Well done, my friend from Brooklyn and Queens.

Mr. Speaker, I now would like to yield to the gentlewoman from Flushing, Queens, New York, Ms. GRACE MENG.

Ms. MENG. Thank you to the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker. Governor Mario Cuomo's legacy is important for all of us to remember here in Congress. Although the late Governor Cuomo is most well known nationally as an eloquent orator and bastion of liberalism, he first received public attention for his career creatively merging the values of social justice and access to affordable housing while protecting family values in my home borough of Queens.

Governor Cuomo's life is a personal inspiration as he was also raised in Queens and born to immigrant parents. Perhaps it was this background that allowed him to regard himself as a progressive pragmatist who upheld the idea that government should be a positive source for good.

This is best seen through Governor Cuomo's advocacy for an activist government that provides shelter for the homeless, work for the idle, and care for the elderly and infirm even in times of austerity. This belief in a dynamic government met some opposition, but Governor Cuomo recognized the crucial safety net and that government investment is the foundation for a strong economy, an understanding that is imperative in today's political and economic climate.

As a mom of two young children, I am particularly touched by his launching of the Decade of the Child to enact educational and health care reforms affecting children. He deeply understood that improving children's lives ultimately better our communities and empowers our future. Under his leadership, New York was the very first State to enact seatbelt laws, and today we continue focusing on making sure that children's toys and car seats are safe and effective. This academic year, New York City implemented universal pre-K, a concept that the late-Governor Mario Cuomo championed and the current Governor Andrew Cuomo aptly budgeted for success.

I believe in what Hubert Humphrey said:

The moral test of a government is how it treats those who are at the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the aged; and those who are in the shadow of life, the sick, the needy, and the handicapped.

I think that Hubert Humphrey would have found Governor Cuomo to be a

strong, moral leader and, like the rest of us, would have mourned the loss of an inspired beacon of progressive ideology.

I join my colleagues today from the New York delegation in sending condolences and sympathy to the entire Cuomo family, and know that Governor Cuomo's respected legacy will be a blessing to us all.

Mr. CROWLEY. I thank the gentle lady for her remarks. I thank all the members of the New York delegation, as well as Ms. PELOSI, the Democratic leader, for their remarks today and remembrance of the great Governor of the State of New York, Mario Cuomo.

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity at the early age of 15 years of age to be engaged in, really, my first political campaign. My then-Uncle Walter Crowley, who was one of my political idols in life, along with a fellow by the name of Michael Dowd, were in charge of a portion of Queens County in terms of making sure that, I think, the Catholic vote came out for Mario Cuomo during the 1977 race for mayor of New York, which was famously won in that primary by Ed Koch. But that was not the only election that Mario Cuomo—and storied election—that Mario Cuomo was a part of. He had been a part of elections before that, and, lo and behold, in 1982 he once again found himself in a matchup between himself and Ed Koch, and Mario Cuomo prevailing in that statewide election.

At 15 years of age, I remember handing out literature at the churches in western Queens and southern Queens, and it really was my entree into a political life. Then, in 1984, as a student at Queens College, I interned in the office of then-Governor Cuomo. And what an experience that was to be working with Bob Sullivan, his storied pollster, but officially, on the official side, was working in the statistics office with Dick Starkey, a former reporter, a storied reporter in New York City; Marty Steadman; to have Tim Russert walk into the room. We all died because Tim Russert just walked into the room.

I can remember in 1986 when I was elected to the State assembly how supportive Mario Cuomo was to me as a young man, recommending me to travel around the world with ACYPL, to come here to Washington to get my feet wet as well, to get that Washington sense. I remember being on the second floor in 1988 in the Blue Room, what is known as the Blue Room where the Governor would give his budgets, anticipating his delving into, diving into the 1988 Presidential elections, only to have my heart broken when Mario Cuomo said he would not run in that election.

Mario Cuomo was tough. He had one of the biggest hearts I have ever come to know.

He had also gone to law school, my Uncle Walter, and there was an intimacy between the Crowleys and the Cuomo family in Queens County politics, one that exists to this day with

his son Andrew, as Governor, and my family as well.

Mario Cuomo always did the right thing. He always did the right thing. And Mario Cuomo had an incredible magnetism about him. I have never seen, outside of people who are Presidents of the United States, the kind of magnetic sense that Mario Cuomo emitted. People wanted to be around him. Whenever he was publicly out, he was walking in the street or at an event, it was hard to get near Mario Cuomo because everyone wanted to be around Mario Cuomo.

I was always nervous around Mario Cuomo, a healthy nervousness, but I was excited to be around him. I always wanted to be around him. I loved the man. I loved him dearly, although I never had enough time to be with him. As PAUL TONKO had said at the funeral—and what a beautiful funeral Mario Cuomo had, what an incredibly beautiful funeral—simple, yet elegant. That is how I describe it. His son Andrew and his entire family, how respectful they were of their father. And I think of the people who attended that funeral had to walk away knowing that these children, all of them, were raised so well: Andrew, Margaret, Madeline, Maria, and Christopher. And all their grandchildren, how they behaved. It was just remarkable, just wonderful to see the respect they had for their father and their grandfather, for their in-law.

But Andrew had said that his father told him you don't tell people what they want to hear—and I am paraphrasing. He told them you tell them what they need to hear. You told them what you wanted to tell them, the message you wanted to get across.

It wasn't always popular, the message of Mario Cuomo; but I do know that people, even when they disagreed with him, they respected him and they admired him because of his tenacity, because he believed in what he was saying.

□ 2030

I think what they respected about him was he was always consistent as well in his thoughts. We will miss Mario Cuomo. Queens County, his home borough, will miss him. The city of New York and the State of New York, and, I think, the country have lost a great statesman, someone who didn't look to the next election but looked to the next great issue that needed to be tackled, not only in New York, because New York in many respects is the leader of State legislators in the country; he was thinking nationally, he was thinking globally as well.

Mario Cuomo will forever be one of my heroes, as is Lincoln. Mario Cuomo was bipartisan. He loved Lincoln, a Republican, but was true to his own democratic principles and his party as well. There is not enough time to say everything about him. But, Mr. Speaker, I once again want to thank the delegation for their loyalty this evening

and being here for as long as they were, and the indulgence of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

OPPOSING RAPPROCHEMENT WITH CUBA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CARTER of Georgia). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am so humbled and pleased to see my colleagues who have turned out tonight at this late hour in a bipartisan manner to say that we reject the President's ill-advised treatment of the policy of rapprochement with the Cuban regime, and no one is better able and better equipped to talk about freedom and democracy and our fight for justice than Mr. CHABOT.

I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT), a senior member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and chairman of the House Small Business Committee.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to join with my colleague and friend, Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN, in opposition to the December 17 announcement by President Obama to change U.S. policy toward Cuba. We will also be joined by some of our other colleagues, and I want to particularly thank Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN for her leadership on all issues regarding Cuba. She has been a leader on this issue for a long, long time and will continue to be, I am sure.

This policy change was a unilateral decision made without consulting Congress and with complete disregard of long-term national security consequences. Similarly, the so-called prisoner exchange was terribly flawed.

In 2013, Secretary Kerry stated that swapping convicted Cuban spies for Alan Gross was off the table, testifying before Congress that since Mr. Gross was wrongly imprisoned, there was no equivalency to pursue a spy for spy tradeoff. Let us be clear: the freedom of Alan Gross is welcome news, but this exchange was totally one-sided. It was tragically flawed. It was not in the best interest of the people of the United States, and it was not in the best interest of the people of Cuba.

As my colleague, Representative ROS-LEHTINEN, has rightly highlighted these past few weeks since the decision and the prisoner exchange occurred, Cuban spies have been responsible for the deaths of American lives. It is absolutely true that they have been. And they have been released. Those are the people who were responsible for American deaths. Cuban patriots who have risked their lives every day to fight for basic rights and freedoms feel betrayed.

The exchange was flawed. The policy itself is flawed, and the announcement

has also let down one of the United States' strongest ally in the world, Israel. Year after year, Israel has stood at the United States' side—one of the very few—supporting the United States at the United Nations in 98 percent of all votes, including votes that the world's worst actors pushed through to condemn the U.S. embargo on Cuba.

Unfortunately, those who have long nourished and fostered cozy relationships with Cuba, most notably Russia and Venezuela and various terrorist organizations around the world, are welcoming the policy changes with open arms.

We need to be honest about the implications of President Obama's new policy. His unilateral decision to change Cuba policy poses a threat to U.S. national security. If the trade embargo is lifted, money will flow into the hands of the Castro brothers, allowing them to financially support surreptitious espionage activities with terrorist groups like Hezbollah and nations like North Korea.

Since the President made his public announcement, nearly 100 Cubans have already been detained. The United States should always stand for democracy and freedom around the world. We should demand that the Castro regime release all political prisoners and hold free and fair elections before establishing diplomatic relations.

I once again thank the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for her leadership in this area for many, many years, and it is an honor to speak this evening with her.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I thank the gentleman from Ohio very much, and thank you for looking out for our U.S. national security, and thank you for trying to uphold the values of freedom throughout the world.

Mr. CHABOT brought up the fact that Mr. Kerry, speaking before our committee, said that we would not release spies for Alan Gross' life. And that came because of a question posed by our next speaker, and I am pleased to yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SIRES), the ranking member of the House Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere.

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for allowing me to speak tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my disappointment and deep concerns regarding the administration's plan for loosening the sanctions and initiating diplomatic discussions with the Cuban dictatorship. It is naive and misguided to think that this is going to give us the long-desired political and economic changes that the Cuban people deserve.

In fact, just a few days after the announcement, Raul Castro made sure to dispel any misgivings and brazenly declared that the regime would not abandon its communist path, let alone loosen its stranglehold over the people of Cuba. I feel that the administration has abandoned all those Cuban people for all those years who fought for

human rights and democracy in Cuba. I feel that those people who are still lingering in the Cuban jails are so disappointed in this administration's efforts.

You know, the Alan Gross release should have been something joyous. And we all wanted Alan Gross released because he was incarcerated for no reason other than he was foreign. But to release three Cuban spies or a network of spies that exists in this country currently is just not acceptable. Alan Gross should have been released on his own. He did nothing. He just went to Cuba to establish some sort of communication for this community.

The other thing that is troubling me, coming from New Jersey, is the fact that there was no discussion about any extradition of the criminals that are currently in Cuba. There are over 100 criminals in Cuba, including Joanne Chesimard, who killed a State trooper in New Jersey point blank 30 years ago. She escaped to Cuba. She has been enjoying the sun, she has been enjoying the beach. Meanwhile, Trooper Werner Foerster's family for over 30 years grew up without a father. And yet we can't seem to get this government to think that it is important that we bring these people to justice. As a matter of fact, the FBI has named Joanne Chesimard as number one in the list of terrorists that they want back.

So to me it was very disappointing because the people of New Jersey, after all these years, are still trying to bring this woman to justice.

People tell me, well, we negotiate and we trade with Vietnam, we trade with China. We trade with other countries. And I say this: that is not the island that I want in Cuba. We haven't helped Vietnam's people at all. There is still no freedom, and there are human rights abuses. You look at China, it is the same thing. You look at North Korea, it is the same thing. I don't want that for the island where I was born. And I surely don't want that kind of government 90 miles away from this country. You know, the history of Cuba, all in the past 50 years of this dictatorship, has been one to try to hurt this country as much as it can, and I certainly don't want that 90 miles from this country.

The administration with this effort has taken away what we believe was a pressure point on a communist dictatorship 90 miles from this country. It has taken away how we can pressure this island. First of all, Russia can't help them any more. Russia used to help Cuba to the tune of \$4 billion a year. Venezuela can't any more. Venezuela is falling apart. There are 30,000 Cubans in Venezuela trying to create the same type of country that we have in Cuba.

And at this point, we take away this pressure and basically give millions of dollars to this dictatorship. People may not know it, but any time anybody sends any money to Cuba, the Cuban government keeps 30 percent of

it. So if you raised it from \$500 to \$2,000, you tell me how many millions that is going to be. When you go to all of the beaches and to the restaurants, that is all government owned. In Cuba, if you want to set up a business, you have to negotiate with the government.

If I want to set up a business and I need 100 workers, I don't go out and get 100 workers, I go out and speak to the government and the government tells me you have to pay \$15 an hour. They in turn give those workers \$2–3 an hour. That is not helping the Cuban people in their economics. That is not helping them move forward.

So I think it is really naive to think that these kinds of changes are going to help. You know, I can only think back when I was young, and I came to this country at the age of 11. I remember when they took all of the books out of the school system and started the indoctrination process. I remember the military coming into my house and they took inventory. My mother and father were poor people, but they took inventory of everything that was in the house. And they threatened my parents that if anything was missing at the time we got our visa, it would be revoked.

This is not the country that I want for Cuba. I want a country with democracy. I want a country where human rights are observed. And yet, for 50 years this dictatorship has been killing.

People talk about Raul Castro as some sort of a changer. People forget that Raul Castro and Che Guevara were the ones who set up the firing squads in Cuba that killed thousands of people. Thousands of people were killed by the firing squads.

So I rise today in total disappointment, and I hope that this administration sees that this is not the way forward, that this is a hardened dictatorship, and that the only way we can deal with this dictatorship is through pressure. Through pressure is the only way to deal with these people, especially at this time. There is nobody that is going to come out and bail out Cuba.

□ 2045

Just last year, they were funneling arms to North Korea right in our backyard. Is this the kind of government we want 90 miles from our shores?

I thank my good friends for having this hour, allowing me to express my sentiments, and I thank all my colleagues who are here speaking with the same approach.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, as you heard from Mr. SIRES, he was born and reared in Cuba, but you don't have to be a Cuban American to understand the principles that are at stake here. One person who knows that is a wonderful congressman from our great State of Florida. So I am proud to yield to the gentleman from Florida, GUS BILIRAKIS.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you for holding this very important Special Order.

Way back in the Florida Legislature, when I was a member of the Cuban Caucus, so proud to be a member of the Cuban Caucus, I started speaking out against the Castro brothers' brand of oppression.

Over the past 5 years, I joined with all of you to decry Alan Gross' arrest. I am thankful for his recent release. Alan Gross' freedom was long overdue, we all agree. I am glad he is safely on U.S. soil, but a large injustice remains: the plights of Cuban citizens, who have suffered for over five decades under the Castro regime in search of basic human rights and political freedoms that we as Americans, frankly, take for granted.

Then, almost out of nowhere, the Obama administration decides to normalize relations with Cuba. This will allow American dollars to the rescue of the Castro brothers at a critical time.

Their normal economic benefactors—Russia and Venezuela—cannot afford to help. Now, more than ever, economic sanctions can be used as an effective tool to force the Castro regime to afford basic human rights and political freedoms to all of Cuba's citizens.

Scholars have noted that normalizing our economic policy with oppressive countries, like China or Vietnam, have produced no significant improvements in human rights treatment.

Given the precedent, there is no reason to believe the situation with Cuba will yield significant different results. In fact, we already know that the suffering for Cuba's citizens will continue, unfortunately. Raul Castro proclaimed that there would be no renunciation of any of their principles. Cuban restrictions on free speech, assembly, and press will remain. They proved it just this last week.

Travel and tourism will remain strictly controlled by the Castro regime. Tourism dollars that Americans will spend will go directly to the oppressors.

We cannot ignore the sense of betrayal that Cuban defectors feel in response to the President's plan. We should be demanding genuine freedom: release of all political prisoners, universal human rights, Democratic principles, and a free market for the Cuban people.

In order to ensure the citizens of Cuba stand a chance to benefit from this ill-advised agreement, Cuba's despots must relinquish control and eradicate their tools of tyranny. Actual human rights reforms must occur before any commercial or political normalization takes place.

I will continue to monitor the actions on the island in search of positive movement.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. BILIRAKIS, I thank you for your clear and consistent message that restrictions should not be lifted against the Castro regime until those conditions are met.

Our next speaker, Mr. Speaker, is the gentleman from Alabama, Congressman BRADLEY BYRNE, who so under-

stands that good trade is based on free and fair countries that cherish the principles upon which our great country was founded—freedom, democracy, respect for the rule of law—all of which are missing in today's Cuba. His great city of Mobile, Alabama, will greatly benefit once we have free trade and fair trade with a Democratic Cuba. I yield to the gentleman from Mobile, Alabama.

Mr. BYRNE. I thank the gentlewoman, both for your time and for your leadership on this very important issue.

As she said, I represent Mobile, Alabama. If you go and look at a map, it is a straight shot north from Havana to Mobile. For over three centuries, Mobile has been a major port for the export of goods and import of goods back and forth between Cuba and the United States. It is in the economic best interest of the people in my district for us to get to the point where we have normalized relations and trade with Cuba.

I should be ardently in favor of this deal that the President is pursuing, but I am not. This is not the time, these are not the circumstances, and—to put it simply—this is not the way to do this.

Let me address the way for a moment. It has been alluded to previously that we have done deals with China and with Vietnam. In both cases, the Presidents involved worked with Congress. That is critically important to whatever success they have had in both of those deals.

In this circumstance, the President has refused to work with Congress. You can't reach the sort of agreement that he is looking for without Congress. You can't have an embassy unless we are willing to pay for it. You can't have an ambassador unless the Senate approves the ambassador.

He is pursuing what, in essence, is an errand that cannot result in success that he is looking for, but he is pursuing it anyway without us because this is just another example of these efforts to make these unilateral, executive-type decisions, leaving Congress to decide to try to keep itself relevant as he becomes a lameduck President. That is no way to do this.

Let me address the circumstances. I can't say it any better than the prior speakers have said it. This is a brutally oppressive regime that cannot change, and until they change, until they put in motion the things that we are talking about for change, I don't see how a country like the United States can seriously engage in negotiations with them.

Most importantly, for me, from my perspective, I serve on the House Armed Services Committee—I don't think I have to tell everybody here the history of this country—this country with this regime in charge allowed the then-Soviet Union to put nuclear missiles aimed at the United States on their soil. They have never apologized for that; they have never renounced that.

As we heard earlier, just a year ago, they were caught redhanded in an arms deal with the North Koreans, who are presently enemies of the United States. What sort of assurance do we have as part of this deal that Cuba is not going to be a staging ground for military activity, terrorist activity, against the people and the security of the United States of America? Nothing, nothing; yet we engaged in this deal, a very bad deal from my perspective—and I don't want to take anything away from the American citizen who we were able to bring back home—but look who we traded in return for that.

It reminds me of the Bergdahl deal we had last year that was so very controversial. This administration doesn't know how to make a good deal. They know how to give everything away and get very little back.

I want to normalize relationships with Cuba. I want us to open up that trade again because it is going to benefit my district.

I am willing to do anything I can to help make that happen, but this country should never give in to people like the Castro brothers until there is a change in that regime, until there is a change in the Government of Cuba, until they renounce their activities that have been against the security of the United States, until we know that we have a good faith trading partner and a good faith partner, period, in this hemisphere.

I look forward to the day when I can stand at the Port of Mobile and welcome goods coming in from Cuba and goods going out from Mobile to Cuba as part of a deal that is made in the right way, under the right circumstances, for the right reason. I hope and pray that that day comes, but that day is not today.

I thank the gentlewoman for her leadership. I look forward to continuing to follow that leadership in the days to come.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much. I am so thankful to my good friend from Mobile, Alabama, for his words, because he understands that American principles are not for sale.

I would like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that every country with whom the Castro brothers do business is a country to whom they owe a lot of money. They have not paid all of their bills to any businesses, and they have not paid what they owe to any country, and it would be all the same for Mobile, Alabama. Thank you for standing up for U.S. values.

Now, I am so pleased to yield to my good friend from South Carolina, a gentleman who understands the threat to our hemisphere. Why? Because he is the chairman of the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. DUNCAN), my good friend.

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina. I thank the gentlewoman from Florida for her leadership on this issue, not just today, but for her whole tenure in Congress.

As the new chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, I was grateful to see the return of Alan Gross to the United States last month after 5 years of unjust imprisonment in Cuba. The announcement over this past weekend that the Cubans freed 53 prisoners was also welcome news.

Nevertheless, I have major concerns with the way this administration, the Obama administration, conducted negotiations and the way the decision was made to radically alter longstanding U.S. policy towards Cuba.

The administration failed to consult Congress, failed to consult any Cuban dissidents or civil society in its decision to embark on its new course in Cuba. The administration says this decision will empower the Cuban people; yet softening U.S. policy without concrete Cuban reforms will only boost the Castro regime and government and facilitate the survival of the communist regime.

We need to focus not on what is best for the Cuban Government, the Castro regime, we need to focus on what is best for the Cuban people.

I ask you this: Will this deal mean more self-governance for the Cuban people? Will it mean more economic freedom for those who strive to innovate, those that are entrepreneurial within the Cuban society? Will they be able to start more businesses and have economic freedom? Will there be more religious freedom for the Cuban people? Will there be more rights to free speech? Are the Cuban people seeing this debate tonight on Cuban TV? Are the Cuban people able to access the Internet and watch what we are doing via YouTube or any other media? These are rhetorical questions, but I answer them with “no,” based on my understanding.

I recall it was only 1 week after the announcement of this U.S.-Cuba deal that the Cuban Government cracked down on peaceful protestors in Havana's Revolutionary Square. I point to that as evidence that it is still a closed communistic society.

In conclusion, the administration's decision is a reward to the communist dictatorship at the expense of the Cuban people. This action is especially disgraceful when we consider the administration's disrespect toward our friend and ally in Canada by vowing to veto legislation approving the construction of the Keystone pipeline.

These are issues that require vigorous congressional oversight. I look forward to working with the ranking member, Mr. SIRE, that you just heard from, as we hold hearings in the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere in the coming weeks and month.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Mr. DUNCAN. We are so pleased that we have this dynamic duo of the chairman and the ranking member of Western Hemisphere. You are so right to point out, Mr. DUNCAN, that there is no freedom of the press in Cuba. That

is one of the many freedoms that Cuban people are denied.

Now, I yield to my colleague from Florida, Congressman RON DESANTIS, who is a war veteran, but who understands that the war for freedom and democracy takes on many fronts, a member of our House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. DESANTIS. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to recognize my colleague from Florida because she is just not only on the House floor fighting for freedom for the Cuban people, with whom she obviously has ancestral relations, she fights for freedom for everybody. Whether it is in Venezuela or Iran, she is there; you can set your clock to it.

When I first heard about these concessions, I was really scratching my head. I texted some of my colleagues, and I was like: “We are not really getting anything for this.”

Sure enough, Raul Castro goes out, talks to the people, and says: “We are not changing. We are not changing anything.” They are staying exactly with the values that they have been with from the beginning, which are antagonistic to freedom, antagonistic to everything we hold dear in the United States.

□ 2100

You know, when you look at countries like Cuba, a lot of times you don't even need to get into the nitty-gritty. There are just certain signs where you know the nature of the regime. For example, when you look at communism in Eastern Europe, you don't have to look at the daily life or any of that. You just look at the fact that there was a Berlin Wall that kept people in like caged animals. If you look at the differences between North and South Korea, all you have to do is look at that satellite photo at night, where South Korea is lit up like a Christmas tree and North Korea is a land of darkness and despair.

For me, when I think of what is the nature of the Cuban regime, I think all you need to know is that you have tens of thousands of people living in Cuba. It is a nice island, it has great weather, and they are suffocated so much that they are willing to swim across 90 miles of shark-infested waters—the Florida Straits—knowing that they are probably going to die. That is all you need to know.

This is a Stalinist regime. And as my colleague from Alabama mentioned, the Cuban missile crisis wasn't even just that there were nuclear weapons in Cuba pointed at the United States. Fidel Castro was telling Khrushchev to fire them into the United States. We actually were fortunate that Nikita Khrushchev was actually the cooler head in that. So if Castro had his way, there would have been nuclear weapons sent here. And so this is the nature of the regime.

So what are you doing with this policy? To me, I look at it very simply. I

think this fact is true. Every single dollar spent in Cuba benefits the Castro regime. Every single dollar. Europe doesn't have restrictions. Most of the other world doesn't have restrictions. Have the Cuban people benefited from that? Has their standard of living gone up? No. This all goes to benefit the government.

To me, this is the worst possible time to throw the Castro regime a lifeline. If you look at what is happening in Caracas, if you look at what is happening in Moscow, these regimes are buckling because of the decline in the price of oil.

So this is a moment of profound weakness for the Castro regime. And giving them these concessions is exactly what the Castro regime wants. I am scratching my head trying to figure out: What do we get in return for this?

The Americans who had property seized when Castro took power, are any of them getting their property back? No.

What about the Cuban Americans who had to flee? They had their businesses taken, property taken. Are any of them going to get any type of recompense? Of course, not.

What about freedom of speech, political rights, the ability to participate in political life and criticize those in power? Is that being extended to the Cuban people? Not on your life. Nothing.

I will say, it is interesting—and my colleague from Florida mentioned this—the dismal credit rating that Cuba has. They don't pay back any loans. Are we then going to extend Export-Import Bank loans that are backed by the taxpayer to do business in Cuba? The American taxpayer is going to have to end up paying for that. That is not a good source of business for our taxpayers.

The tragedy of this is we have given away leverage that could have come in handy. These Castro brothers are on their last legs. When they finally leave the scene, we want to use the leverage we have to leverage a democratic transition. Instead, we are essentially normalizing status quo. So if the Stalinist dictatorship survives beyond the Castros due to U.S. support, you are going to have 11 million Cubans who are consigned to another generation of tyranny.

I will just say one more thing. When I read the media coverage—and I think I can say this because I am not from south Florida—the coverage is so negative about Cuban Americans who fled Castro. They say: Oh, they're living in the past. This is anachronistic, all this stuff.

For me, the people that I want to talk to to know the true nature of the regime are the people who suffered under the regime, the people who were forced to flee and who had family members killed, had family members in prison. That, to me, is the number one source of information that I would look to.

And so the media frames it as if somehow the American policy is anachronistic. I think it is the Castro regime, based on Stalinist principles, that is anachronistic, and yet it continues to lumber on. And the tragedy of this is that we are giving them a critical lifeline so that they can continue having their country governed like a political prison.

So I appreciate you organizing this, my colleague in Florida. We are giving speeches here tonight, but we need to act in this body, and we need to show that this policy does not represent the will of the American people and does not represent what is best for people in Cuba that are struggling for freedom.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Mr. DESANTIS. You are so right when you categorized this unilateral bad deal as an economic lifeline to the Castro regime.

A person who understands that just as well as you do is our next speaker, the gentleman from Iowa, a senior member of the House Committee on Agriculture, Congressman STEVE KING. He can say: Hey, my State is going to benefit a lot by this deal.

The sad reality, as Mr. KING and I know, is that Castro doesn't pay his debt. As we had just said with the other speaker, he owes everybody money. This deal will not strengthen U.S. national security. It will not be good for America's farmers, and it will not be good for the people of Cuba.

Congressman KING.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentlewoman from Florida for organizing this Special Order, and I associate myself with her words and her position and also that of the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DESANTIS). I didn't, Mr. Speaker, realize how much was in him about this issue. It was instructive for me to listen to that stream forward.

I have had the privilege of serving here in this Congress with a good number of Members that do a great job of representing the interests of the Cuban people, and I also had the privilege of going to Cuba on a legal trip some years ago before I came to this Congress. But I would take you back, Mr. Speaker, to a time in 1959 and trace some of this history.

The revolution against Batista in 1959 was back before we had as many replays on television as we have today. And I recall watching the revolution in Cuba, and as Castro took over, as the promise came that they were going to bring democracy to Cuba—that was the promise. It was going to be democracy; it was going to be free and fair elections, a government of, by, and for the people of Cuba; and they were going to choose their leadership.

But I remember seeing on television the videos of the people who were lined up against the wall and executed without a proper trial, executed without true justice. I remember in particular—it is branded in my memory—a man who insisted: If you are to shoot me here in front of this wall, let me give

the order for my own execution. And he stood there in a Cuban shirt down to here—white pants, white shirt—and he raised his hand and faced the firing squad and dropped his own hand. That was the signal to the firing squad. They fired. He was shot to death in front of that wall, along with many, many others.

We don't know at this point how many political prisoners have been executed, how many have died in custody. We have got a list of some; we don't have a list of all. But we know this: it has never been, since that time in 1959, a government of, by, and for the people of Cuba.

And the hope that there will be the day that the Cuban people would be free was manifested—or at least attempted to be manifested—at the Bay of Pigs. I would have liked to have seen the air cover that would have made that be successful. We didn't get that. But we look for the day to come ever since that the Cuban people could be free. The Cuban people could be free.

Since that time, there has been the nationalization of the real property, which we heard from Mr. DESANTIS. At the time that Castro took control of Cuba, 25 percent of the real estate in Cuba was owned by Americans. They held deeds to that property. There was other land in Cuba that was owned by people from other nationalities.

Every other country was compensated for their real estate, except Americans. No American that I know of has been compensated for their real estate. They hold those deeds to this today, sometimes a second generation.

Before I came to this Congress, while I was there, there was also a situation where the exchange rate for Cuban peso to dollar was 21 to 1 at that time. And so if anyone achieved an American dollar, they could take it into a dollar store and they would get one peso's worth of goods for it or they could deposit it into a Cuban bank and they would get one peso for that. That is a 20-peso difference. And that is one of the things that supported the Castro regime financially.

Another thing that happened was sugar was 6 cents a pound. The Russians paid them 52 cents a pound in oil for the sugar. That was a subsidy of Cuba. When the Soviet Union—it was the Soviet Union rather than just the Russians—collapsed, then the subsidy for Cuba also collapsed and the Cuban economy was no longer propped up.

You saw Russian tractors sitting out there, having been stripped for parts, in the only country in the world I know that had gone from mechanized agriculture to animal husbandry agriculture because their machines no longer worked. And the taxicabs are driven by doctors, with a five-cylinder Russian diesel under the hood of a 1954 Chevrolet.

This country has been frozen in time. It has a collapsed and failed economy. It has been propped up by the subsidy of, first, the Soviet Union, and then

later on, the Venezuelans, who are collapsing, themselves, today.

This is a country of people that are vigorous people. They are an outgoing, hardworking, I will say, gregarious people. I thought I would see people down there that had the thousand-yard hopeless stare. I am sure that exists. But I also saw people that worked hard and they kept their chin up and they kept a smile on their face.

I thought, If these people could be unleashed, if they could be unleashed by the heartbeat of freedom, if we could just get them that opportunity to be who they are, they would become a very, very successful island and trading partner and a nation unto themselves and, one day, an ally of the United States.

So my dream has been to help them with that opportunity, and my dream has been to one day swim ashore at the Bay of Pigs and walk out and wade onto a free Cuba, with a free Cuban.

But, Mr. Speaker, the Cuban people have been burdened with more than five decades of Marxist slavery that they have had to face. And this policy of the President's that comes right on the cusp of what is likely the biological solution in Cuba, which would be the end of the Castro brothers that would come along naturally and the opportunity to bring about a regime change in Cuba, the President of the United States may well have handed Cuba another 50 years of living in Marxist slavery when he had just the opportunity for them to be free.

So our policy here in this Congress, I am hopeful, is the policy that says: regime change in Cuba and a government of, by, and for the people of Cuba. And I, one day, hope and pray to do what I have said with my colleagues here and many others, and that is swim ashore at the Bay of Pigs and wade out on the shore of a free Cuba.

God bless them all.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Mr. KING. That is our fervent hope as well. And we work and we pray every day for that dream of a free Cuba to come alive. We thank you for your voice here tonight. Thank you, my good friend from Iowa.

Mr. Speaker, many people talk about the last generation of Cuban exiles and how this is really not the dream of young Cuban Americans who were born here in the United States, reared here in the United States. They come from Cuban families, but they really don't much care about freedom and democracy and the land of their ancestors.

This next speaker, Mr. Speaker, is a newly elected gentleman who understands that that search for a free and democratic Cuba is a yearning that lives very fervently in his heart, and that is the Congressman from West Virginia, Congressman ALEX MOONEY, who was born here, as American as apple pie, but comes from a proud lineage of Cuban American heritage.

Thank you, Mr. MOONEY.

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. I want to thank Congresswoman ILEANA

ROS-LEHTINEN for arranging this important Special Order to show solidarity with the Cuban people as they continue to live under an oppressive regime.

Mr. Speaker, President Obama has senselessly yielded ground, with no stipulations for reform, to the Cuban regime, with the announcements of a secret deal going around Congress to “normalize” relations. This misguided grab for a legacy item has cost our country and the Cuban people a valuable bargaining chip for their freedom.

Of course, this is yet another foreign policy failure or, more accurately, unilateral surrender from this administration. From the bright red line in Syria, which was crossed with impunity, to sending a secret message to President Putin that, “After the election, I will be more flexible,” to now rewarding tyrants in Cuba who continue to deny basic human rights to their oppressed citizens, President Obama has chosen wrong policies.

The despotic government the President would normalize relations with has, for decades, sought to subjugate the Cuban people's appetite for freedom. The many realized American Dreams of Cuban refugees, including my mother, are a great testament to the greatness of the United States and our constitutional rights. As the beacon of freedom in the world, America must continue to use sensible policy to protect our values around the world and in our own backyard.

□ 2115

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Mr. MOONEY. We are a better Congress for you being a part of it. Thank you so much for being proud of your American heritage and your Cuban American ancestry as well. So, welcome to Congress, sir.

Mr. Speaker, I am about to introduce another millennial, another one of this younger generation of Cuban Americans who the press continues to say don't represent the desires of this new generation.

Well, CARLOS CURBELO is one of our newest elected officials. He was born here in the United States, doesn't know Cuba, and is less than 35 years old but understands that yearning for a free Cuba. We are so pleased as punch to have him here as a Member of our Congress.

I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CURBELO).

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. I thank the gentlelady for yielding, and I thank her for her tireless advocacy and work on this very, very important cause.

Mr. Speaker, during the 56 years of the Cuban tragedy, also known as the Cuban Revolution, there had always been two constants.

First, the nature of the Castro regime, a dictatorship that brutally represses its own people, and that aggressively opposes U.S. national security interests throughout the globe. That has not changed.

The second was that, to varying degrees, the occupant of the White House had always been on the side of the Cuban people and in opposition to their oppressors, who for decades have collaborated with America's most dangerous allies. Today, this is, regrettably, no longer the case.

By trading an American hostage, cruelly held by Cuba's dictators for 5 years, for three criminals convicted of spying against our government, including one who was serving a lifetime sentence for conspiring to murder American citizens, the President sent a message to our enemies that the United States can be extorted.

What was the Cuban government's reward for holding an American hostage for 5 years? Three convicted spies and full diplomatic relations, plus an economic bailout for a financially and morally bankrupt regime.

The men who rule Cuba today are the same men who had nuclear missiles installed on the island and pointed them at the United States, as my colleague from Alabama stated earlier. When they were cash-rich, they ran a robust military and deployed troops throughout the world to fight alongside our most dangerous enemies.

They have trained and supported terrorist groups such as Colombia's FARC. They ordered three American citizens and one resident blown out of the sky in the tragic shootdown of February 24, 1996.

A few months ago, they were caught shipping arms illegally to North Korea, and they collaborated with the Venezuelan government in last year's brutal crackdown, which resulted in the death of over 40 students.

Human rights atrocities by the dictatorship against its people continue. The Castro regime consistently resorts to violence because they know it is the only way they can maintain control since the Cuban people are desperate to be free.

The President's decision to ease sanctions only serves to bolster the dictatorship and its apparatus of repression. There is virtually no private sector in Cuba. More than 85 percent of Cubans work for government controlled-enterprises and earn less than \$20 a month.

Foreign investment doesn't benefit the average Cuban. Cubans that work for corporations with foreign capital are only allowed to keep 8 percent of their salaries. Cuban workers are, in effect, slaves of the dictatorship.

Now, it is important to note, Mr. Speaker, President Obama's administration approved sanctions in recent months against Venezuela and North Korea. Why, then, is it rewarding an enemy of the United States just 90 miles from our shores that actively collaborates with both of these regimes?

Why does the President insist on an incoherent foreign policy that too often rewards our enemies and punishes our allies?

As other American Presidents have shown us in the past, peace through

weakness and appeasement is not an effective strategy for dealing with Cuba's military dictatorship.

We also have to ask ourselves, what kind of neighborhood do we want to live in?

The Americas, the Western Hemisphere, is the American neighborhood of the world. What kind of standards do we want for this part of the world?

Do we want to endorse the chronic abuse of human rights, the imprisonment of people who disagree?

That is the nature of the Cuban government, and we, the United States of America and, by the way, the other nations of this hemisphere, have agreed that we support a democratic form of government, and that we want this part of the world to be free without exception. There is one glaring exception, and it is Cuba.

Our sanctions policy, some say, well, it hasn't worked. Of course the sanctions have worked. The sanctions have denied billions and billions and billions of dollars to a regime that would use those profits to oppose our interests throughout the world.

What did the regime do when it had resources?

It had troops all over the world. It exported revolution. And if you don't know what exporting revolution means, in the context of Cuba, it means aggressively opposing American interests throughout the world.

Today, we remember in a very special way, Mario Manuel de la Pena, Carlos Costa, Armando Alejandro, and Pablo Morales. These were the men who were brutally assassinated by the Cuban regime on February 24 of 1996.

One of the spies was convicted of conspiring to murder these young men, three of whom were American citizens, and the other was a resident of our country. These four men are dead, and the Cuban spies are free.

But it isn't too late, Mr. Speaker. The President still has time to get back on the right side of this issue and on the right side of history by standing against Cuba's dictators, with the victims of their brutality, and for a strong American foreign policy that advances our national security interests.

Again, I want to thank my distinguished colleague from south Florida for her leadership. We have admired her for so many years for her work on this issue.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Mr. CURBELO. You are a fresh young voice, and I thank you and Mr. MOONEY for being here tonight.

Mr. Speaker I am so pleased to yield to a gentleman who understands what freedom is all about. He was one of the speech writers for our great President, Ronald Reagan. He is a senior member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. In fact, he is the chairman of the Europe Subcommittee, and he is here tonight with one of his triplets, Christian, who wants to be an author and an inventor.

I look at Christian, this new generation, and I think, what kind of life

would he have under the communist tyranny of Cuba, as opposed to the freedom and democracy that we enjoy here?

So with that, I am pleased as punch to yield to my good friend from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER).

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much.

America is about to send a message to the world exactly on whose side are we on, and I am very proud to stand here with my colleagues, standing on the side of liberty, of justice, of treating people decently, of government that serves the people rather than a systematic government that requires the people to serve them, the bureaucracy, the tyrants that hold power.

That is what this is all about. Let's get an understanding of who this Castro gang is. Castro murdered the freedom fighters who overthrew the dictatorial government of Batista back in the 1950s.

Castro, himself, took people out who had fought against the dictatorship of Batista and shot them in the head. These were people that risked their lives to bring democracy to Cuba, and this man co-opted their revolution.

He has allied himself, over the years, with gangsters and tyrants throughout the world. He has had a safe haven for the drug dealers of Latin America, who look to him as the moderator of any disputes between these monstrous gangsters who murder each other and murder anyone who gets in their way.

He has allied with these drug dealers. But also, during the cold war he was allied to the hilt to the communist movement throughout the world. He wanted his country to become a nuclear base to attack and drop nuclear bombs on the people of the United States.

Let's not forget that. This is the man who wanted to kill Americans by the millions. For us now, oh, well, that is history; let bygones be bygones.

Are you kidding me?

This is the guy that we need to send a message to. When people have that much hatred of the United States, undermine the freedom of the people in of the world, we are not just going to sit aside and forgive him of these things.

Oh, by the way, he is not even asking for forgiveness. The Castro regime is just saying, accept us as we are, a country that has had more political prisoners than almost any other country of this hemisphere, and we are just going to accept them as they are.

Well, remember, when people were struggling during the cold war against communism, Castro was on the wrong side. During the cold war, he was the one who wanted to kill Americans by the millions by having Soviet missiles in his country.

Finally, what does this agreement that this administration—what will be the effect of it?

Oh, yeah, they say, we have been told, well, if you just have free trade people are going to get better. There is going to be liberalism.

I call this the "hug a Nazi, make a liberal" theory. The fact is that Fidel Castro, just like the Chinese Communists, I might add, no matter how much trade we have, they will manipulate it so that the clique that is in power, the clique that has been able to monstrously oppress their own people, take that wealth, manipulate that wealth that is coming into the country to cement their own power.

It is very clear what this man has and his clique have in mind, and that is continuing their oppression of the Cuban people.

Let's not be partners to that. Let us again, stand for liberty, stand for justice.

The Soviet Union has fallen. It is time for Castro and communism in Cuba to fall as well.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Mr. ROHRABACHER. And you so rightly point out that hours after President Obama announced, in a shocking way, that we would resume diplomatic relations with Cuba and the Castro regime does not have to change, Raul Castro put on his military uniform and spoke to the oppressed island nation and said, hey, don't worry. We are not changing a thing. It is still the same failed regime.

We got nothing from that deal.

Mr. Speaker, I am so pleased to yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART), the chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development. I had the honor of serving with his older brother. I have the honor of serving with his youngest brother now, MARIO. Born in the United States and, just like Carlos and ALEX MOONEY, Mr. CURBELO and Mr. MOONEY, a gentleman who is 100 percent American and so proud of 100 percent of his Cuban ancestry.

Thank you, Mario.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Let me first thank you, Madam Chairwoman, for your leadership. As we heard tonight, your leadership in the cause of freedom does not stop at the shores of Cuba. Wherever there is repression and oppression, there is the clear concise voice of Chairwoman ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, as we have heard again tonight.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard a lot. And I know that the time is getting short, but I want to quote somebody whom we have not quoted, as far as I remember here tonight, and this is President Obama. When Mr. Obama was running for President he stated what the right policy, what his policy would be to deal with the Cuban tyranny.

He said: "My policy towards Cuba will be guided by one word, 'libertad'—freedom. And the road to freedom for all Cubans must begin with justice for Cuba's political prisoners, the right of free speech, a free press, freedom assembly, and it must lead to elections that are free and fair."

Mr. Obama went on to say: "I will maintain the embargo. It provides us

with the leverage to present the regime with a clear choice. If you take significant steps towards democracy, beginning with the freedom of all—all—political prisoners," Mr. Obama said, "we will take steps to begin normalizing relations. That is the way to bring about real change in Cuba," Mr. Obama said, "through strong, smart principled democracy."

□ 2130

Mr. Speaker, in essence, that day, then-candidate Obama, Senator Obama, and now-President Obama drew a red line about what the right policy was to deal with the Cuban regime; sadly, on December 17, President Obama announced that he was breaking that promise, that he was, once again, crossing—breaking—his own red line.

We have heard tonight that we have also heard from the vast majority of the pro-democracy leaders within the island who are struggling. They have objected to President Obama's change of policy. Mr. Speaker, if President Obama doesn't want to do it for the sake of a future of freedom for the Cuban people, he should stand firm for the sake of the national security interests of the United States.

As we have heard today—right now, as we speak, not 50 years ago—the Cuban regime harbors fugitives from American law, including cop killers and terrorists. What is President Obama's answer? "No problem, we will normalize relations."

The Cuban regime has an active espionage network against the interests of the United States. What is the President's answer to that? "No problem, we will normalize. You can continue to do that."

The Cuban regime shot down two American airplanes in international airspace; and for the people who are in prison, including one who was in prison for conspiracy to murder, not only is it okay—no problem, we will normalize—but no. We will send them back. You can go back home.

Mr. Speaker, the night is late, but I know and I am confident that, unlike President Obama, this Congress will continue to stand firm with the cause of freedom and the cause of a free Cuba, even while President Obama does not.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Mr. DIAZ-BALART. You so eloquently stated that. We have so much to say, and we have run out of time.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind Members not to refer to guests on the floor of the House.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 37, PROMOTING JOB CREATION AND REDUCING SMALL BUSINESS BURDENS ACT; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 185, REGULATORY ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2015; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 240, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114-2) on the resolution (H. Res. 27) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 37) to make technical corrections to the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, to enhance the ability of small and emerging growth companies to access capital through public and private markets, to reduce regulatory burdens, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 185) to reform the process by which Federal agencies analyze and formulate new regulations and guidance documents; and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 240) making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

AMERICA'S FREE TRADE DEFICIT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) until 10 p.m.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to paint a picture of U.S. job loss resulting from our trade policies extending back now almost three decades.

I rise because America has a huge "good jobs" deficit because we have a gigantic trade deficit. That means more imports come in here than our exports go out, largely because markets and other places are closed. Our workers and our communities have paid a tremendous price for this.

I oppose any further NAFTA-like trade agreements, such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which the administration is proposing. That will ship out more U.S. jobs. We have had enough. The American people have had enough.

Since 1975, when Wall Street's free trade job outsourcing roulette began, America has amassed a \$9.3 trillion trade deficit with the world. If you look at this chart, we have on here every single trade agreement that was signed and all of the lost jobs that resulted from the growing trade deficits we are amassing with countries around the world. This has never happened before over our history in the United States of America. It is a very serious problem.

The staggering loss of productivity associated with this deficit translates into a huge job loss here at home. In fact, that \$9.3 trillion of accumulated trade deficit of more imports coming in here than exports going out has actually cost us over 47,500,000 lost American jobs.

Most of those were really good jobs that paid living wages, jobs that just evaporated from our communities, jobs that were shipped to Mexico or to China, Korea, Bangladesh, Honduras, Guatemala, Turkey, El Salvador—everywhere in the world—largely to the Third World, and, frankly, to undemocratic countries where workers are treated like a bonded class.

Our workers, no matter how loyal or hardworking, became expendable as this began. In fact, they were treated like expendable widgets. What is being hurt in the process is the belief of the public that the value of hard work has any meaning. There are some workers who have simply dropped out.

Yes, American jobs are being outsourced year after year—for over a quarter century now—and workers are being treated like a game of musical chairs. Our jobs have been shipped out to penny-wage sweatshops hidden behind the Iron Curtain of anonymous towns in distant places most Americans will never visit. Anonymity, exploitation, and hidden squalor are as fundamental to free trade as the hollowing out of American jobs, our communities, and our middle class.

Those who exploit workers in our country and globally believe they are so powerful that the American people won't be able to rein them in, and they think this Congress will continue to behave as it did before, despite the evidence that this doesn't work for the American people.

Some of those very powerful interests are asking for another Fast Track trade deal to do it all over again in something called the Trans-Pacific Partnership, on an even bigger scale, including nations with the grossest violations of basic human rights.

Let me turn first to the broken promises of NAFTA, which was really the fundamental agreement passed—over my objections—in the early 1990s and another agreement, CAFTA, that dealt with Central America. Fast-forward to this past summer when thousands of migrant children from Central America swarmed our southern border. Remember that?

The American press acted surprised upon their arrival, and some people even threw tomatoes at buses that carried children from one detention facility to another.

These children had lived under 20 years of NAFTA and CAFTA in Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. They had experience with the NAFTA trade agreement and the CAFTA trade agreement, which covers those countries, trade agreements that were sold as opportunities that would rise the tide of all boats, of all workers.

What happened? Here in the United States, we had a huge loss of jobs to those countries, and Mexico's and Central America's infrastructures were not modernized. Their standard of living was not raised.

In fact, the promise that those countries somehow would turn into stylistically rustic versions of the American consumer market never happened. They were told new jobs would abound, but our Nation began to hemorrhage jobs to Mexico as wages in Mexico and throughout Central America began to drop. Those deficits became part of the overall total.

The problem is that in most of these countries where the free trade agreements were signed, what you see happening is more goods coming in here than our goods going out, a little trickle going to some places. In Mexico, what happened ever since NAFTA's passage was that we were promised trade balances. Every single year, it has gotten worse and worse and worse.

This week, the broken promises sold to the American public and their elected officials is that these agreements would really work. The people who voted for those agreements should pay some attention to the debate of trying to withhold funding for the Department of Homeland Security because of the President's action on immigration.

The stories of the youth being shipped back by the planeloads tell of families' lands being stolen from under them. The land was handed over to multinational corporate agricultural groups that come in and grow, for example, palm oil.

Local displaced farmers were forced into urban settings—desperate, in search of food, in search of work at factories where jobs that were promised in return for the land—guess what—never materialized. Here on our own continent, the children became the refugees of transnational economic policies that harmed the entire continent.

Hardly anyone even talked about that; but when you have this kind of disruption, when you have so much job loss, and when you have land, transferring title with millions of farmers disrupted from their way of life, what do we expect?

Millions of displaced people in Mexico and Central America living in the shadow of border plants and urban factories exist in a state of peonage that makes older versions of slavery look positively beneficent, squatting on poisoned ground in jerry-rigged plywood and tar paper shacks.

I have been in those shacks. I have gone to those places. When you do, you never forget it. Next door, water in gullies that surround these places is so polluted that communities smell of a rancid odor, and even chickens that they keep to try to feed themselves die from the drinking water. We have seen it. We have been there.

The displaced population on the run is surging, thanks in large part to NAFTA and CAFTA's agricultural provisions, those very flawed provisions

that provided no opportunity for adjustment as a First World nation met the economy of Third World nations.

The terms of the agreement forced the revocation of land and allowed multinationals to begin buying up vast tracts in the interior, pushing untold millions of peasant farmers, who remain nameless, off their land and into the labor pool of the maquiladoras; yet we, as Americans, are surprised when their children, as migrants, flock to our southern border.

If we seriously looked at the impact of our free trade agreements, we would easily see the havoc wrought on local economies throughout the lands on the other side of the border. Those who forced this to happen should know the consequences of their policies and what they reap: legions of desperate workers willing to do anything to survive.

Now, let me turn to the Trans-Pacific Partnership that proposes to expand trade into regions with the worst labor violations and working conditions.

We can't be fooled into thinking expanding trade agreements with 11 new nations in the Pacific rim will actually be the end to American jobs being shipped overseas. Of the 11 nations with which the United States is negotiating the Trans-Pacific Partnership, nine have wage levels significantly lower than our own.

This will only intensify the already real reduction in wages American workers are experiencing year after year as our jobs are shipped overseas to increase profits of shareholders as they take advantage of impoverished laborers.

Worse yet, for the immigration debate, as those who run the maquilas of Mexico and Central America realize, the next move will be to Vietnam for even cheaper labor. Factories on this continent will shut down, further exacerbating the poor economic conditions of our southern neighbors, leaving even fewer options other than for those individuals to flee north, seeking any economic opportunity to sustain themselves.

I wanted to spend a moment looking at the Korean agreement because that was one of the latest ones they brought up here as a free trade agreement. They promised there would be thousands of jobs and that America would be able to sell 50,000 vehicles to Korea.

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Well, guess what. We haven't even hit 10,000, while there have been over 561,000—half a million—vehicles sent from Korea here. So look at what is happening with the Korean agreement, another free trade agreement which just passed a couple of years ago. The proof is in the pudding.

The Fast Track procedure, which allows no amendment here on the floor, yields this—more red ink for the United States.

We were promised that the Korean agreement would create jobs and help balance our trade deficit in an effort to

strengthen our economy and rebuild the American auto industry. Nothing could be further from the truth, as with every other agreement.

We are in a deep trade deficit with Korea. The U.S.-Korean free trade agreement promised 70,000 jobs. In actuality, we have already lost 40,000. It is going in exactly the opposite direction.

The U.S. Census Bureau recently revealed that the United States had a \$2.8 billion monthly trade deficit with Korea just in November of last year, the highest monthly U.S. goods trade deficit with Korea on record. The historic U.S. trade deficit with Korea was driven by a record-setting \$6.3 billion in imports from Korea and a lackluster \$3.5 billion in exports to Korea from the United States. Auto sales did not surge, as we were promised. Exactly the reverse is true.

And now we can look at China. You know, the story is no different. You would think we would have learned something. But if you look at trade with China—and China became a member of the World Trade Organization in 2001—Americans were promised, again, that that deal would expand market opportunities for United States companies, thereby increasing jobs here and American prosperity.

How has this worked out? Let me share some specifics:

The United States has lost over 64,000 manufacturing firms and at least 5.8 million manufacturing jobs to China. In the year 2013, the latest complete year of data, America actually racked up a \$319 billion trade deficit with China. And you know this to be true because everything you buy—coffee cups, clothing, electronics, even solar panels—are all made in China. And the massive deficit we have racked up with China just in 1 year—that 1 year—amounted to a loss of 1.5 million American jobs. And that is just 1 year's damage.

What America needs is not more of the same NAFTA-styled trade agreements. What America and American workers need is a trade policy that creates jobs, opportunity, and wealth in this country first. We need balanced trade accounts, not trade accounts that are in the red with every single country with which we have racked up these deficits. The American people—not just the global corporate elite—need to be in the driver's seat again, and that is where Congress has to do its job. Our Nation needs a trade policy that is results-oriented, that will yield jobs in America.

We must open closed markets of the world. We must grow our exports. We must hold those who wrote these agreements accountable for the damage that they have done, and we must not create any more free trade agreements that dig the hole deeper.

We must create jobs here in our country by moving our Nation toward economic independence—not dependence—by rebuilding our own manufac-

turing base here at home, by restoring our domestic energy security, and by making sure that these agreements result not in deficits, but in trade balances and, even more importantly, trade surpluses.

Mr. Speaker, there are ways that a developed nation can trade with the developing world without gutting its own economy. America has got to figure out how to get there. And no trade deal should be brought up here under that Fast Track procedure where Congress can't amend until we fix what is wrong with these agreements. Haven't we learned in three decades that that flawed trade model just simply isn't working?

Pushing huge trade agreements, like the Trans-Pacific Partnership, through Congress on a Fast Track course with no opportunity for amendment is not the way to create a strong middle class, rising wages, and real opportunity for the American people. Now is the time to hold this administration and this Congress accountable for changing course and start to invest in this country again and make sure that these trade partners with whom we do business open their markets. To do any less is to continue to harm the American people and continue to have this enormous downward pressure on job creation in this country and wage levels and benefit levels in this country, where the average American hasn't seen a raise in years. We have to change. This is too great a price for the American people to pay.

So this evening, I thank those who are listening for their time. I thank the Speaker for the time this evening.

I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. COHEN (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of flight delay due to weather.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

Ms. TITUS (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

BILLS PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on January 9, 2015, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 26. To extend the termination date of the Terrorism Insurance Program established under the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act of 2002, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 50 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, January 13, 2015, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS,
ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

18. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility, Caroline County, MD, et al. [Docket ID: FEMA-2014-0002] [Internal Agency Docket No.: FEMA-8363] received January 7, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

19. A letter from the Director, Office of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Assessments (RIN: 3064-AE16) received January 7, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

20. A letter from the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Title IV Treatment of Rollovers From Defined Contribution Plans to Defined Benefit Plans (RIN: 1212-AB23) received January 7, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

21. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Clarification to Scope of Certain "600 Series" ECCNs [Docket No.: 141119982-4982-01] (RIN: 0694-AG40) received January 7, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

22. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revision to the Export Administration Regulations: Controls on Electronic Commodities; Exports and Reexports to Hong Kong [Docket No.: 141107937-4937-01] (RIN: 0694-AG33) received January 7, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

23. A letter from the Director, International Cooperation, Department of Defense, transmitting pursuant to Section 27(f) of the Arms Export Control Act and Executive Order 13637, Transmittal No. 13-14, informing the Congress of the Department's intent to sign a Memorandum of Agreement with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Communications and Information Organisation (NCIO), as represented by the NATO Communications and Information Agency; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

24. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser, Office of Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report concerning international agreements other than treaties, entered into by the United States, to be transmitted to the Congress within the sixty-day period specified in the Case-Zablocki Act, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

25. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Energy, transmitting the Department's Fiscal Year 2014 Agency Financial Report; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

26. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting the Department's semiannual report from the Office of Inspector General for the period April 1, 2014, through September 30, 2014; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

27. A letter from the Director, Planning and Policy Analysis, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's final

rule — Federal Employees Health Benefits Program Miscellaneous Changes: Medically Underserved Areas (RIN: 3206-AN03) received January 7, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

28. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zones within the Captain of the Port New Orleans Zone, Louisiana [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0993] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received January 7, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

29. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Regulated Navigation Area; Arthur Kill, NY and NJ [Docket No.: USCG-2013-1063] (RIN: 1625-AA11) received January 7, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

30. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone, Christina River; Wilmington, DE [Docket No.: USCG-2014-1033] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received January 7, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

31. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Additional Requirements for Charitable Hospitals; Community Health Needs Assessments for Charitable Hospitals; Requirement of a Section 4959 Excise Tax Return and Time for Filing the Return [TD 9708] (RIN: 1545-BK57; RIN: 1545-BL30; RIN: 1545-BL58) received January 5, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

32. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Safe harbor methods of accounting for cable system operators (Rev. Proc. 2015-12) received January 5, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

33. A letter from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, OLCA, OLD0, Office of Regulations and Reports Clearance, Social Security Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Extension of Expiration Dates for Several Body System Listings [Docket No.: SSA-2014-0068] (RIN: 0960-AH72) received January 7, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

34. A letter from the Administrator, TSA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Administration's certification that the level of screening services and protection provided at Portsmouth International Airport (PSM) at Pease will be equal to or greater than the level that would be provided at the airport by TSA Transportation Security Officers, pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 44920(d); to the Committee on Homeland Security.

35. A letter from the Chairman, Medicare Payment Advisory Commission, transmitting a report to the Congress entitled "Impact of Home Health Payment Rebased on Beneficiary Access to and Quality of Care", pursuant to Public Law 111-148, section 3301; jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON
PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk

for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. SESSIONS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 27. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 37) to make technical corrections to the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, to enhance the ability of small and emerging growth companies to access capital through public and private markets, to reduce regulatory burdens, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 185) to reform the process by which Federal agencies analyze and formulate new regulations and guidance documents; and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 240) making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes (Rept. 114-2). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mrs. ELLMERS (for herself, Mr. KIND, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 270. A bill to continue the use of a 3-month quarter EHR reporting period for health care providers to demonstrate meaningful use for 2015 under the Medicare and Medicaid EHR incentive payment programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BILIRAKIS (for himself, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. JOLLY, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. PALAZZO, and Mr. RUIZ):

H.R. 271. A bill to establish a commission to examine the evidence-based therapy treatment model used by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for treating mental illnesses of veterans and the potential benefits of incorporating complementary alternative treatments available in non-Department of Veterans Affairs medical facilities within the community; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. WALBERG (for himself, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. TONKO, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. CONNOLLY, and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina):

H.R. 272. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to increase the priority for enrollment of medal of honor recipients in the health care system of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. RUSH:

H.R. 273. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to enhance services to small business concerns that are disadvantaged, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. RUSH:

H.R. 274. A bill to lift the trade embargo on Cuba, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, Energy and Commerce, the Judiciary, Financial Services, Oversight and Government Reform, and Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. RUSH (for himself, Mr. BARTON, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Mr. DENT):
H.R. 275. A bill to establish a commission to identify and examine issues of national concern related to the conduct of intercollegiate athletics, to make recommendations for the resolution of the issues, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. BLACK:

H.R. 276. A bill to prohibit the Secretary of Homeland Security from using Federal funds for the position of Public Advocate, or the position of Deputy Assistant Director of Custody Programs and Community Outreach, within U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HASTINGS:

H.R. 277. A bill to prohibit assistance to the Palestinian Authority until it withdraws its request to join the International Criminal Court; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. LARSEN of Washington (for himself and Ms. DELBENE):

H.R. 278. A bill making supplemental appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for the TIGER discretionary grant program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Appropriations, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LATTA (for himself, Mr. JONES, Mr. WEBER of Texas, and Mr. RANGEL):

H.R. 279. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to limit the authority of the Federal Communications Commission over providers of broadband Internet access service; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 280. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to recoup bonuses and awards paid to employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PALAZZO (for himself, Mr. HARPER, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. OLSON, Mr. JONES, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. MARINO, Mr. POMPEO, Mr. PITTS, and Mr. ROTHFUS):

H.R. 281. A bill to prohibit recovery of damages in certain wrongful birth and wrongful life civil actions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RIBBLE (for himself, Mr. POCAN, Mr. MCKINLEY, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, and Mr. TAKANO):

H.R. 282. A bill to amend the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to require that the Congressional Budget Office prepare long-term scoring estimates for reported bills and joint resolutions that could have significant economic and fiscal effects outside of the normal scoring periods; to the Committee on the Budget, and in addition to the Committee on Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SALMON (for himself and Mr. GOSAR):

H.R. 283. A bill to improve the provisions relating to the privacy of electronic communications; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. TIBERI (for himself, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. HANNA, Mr. HARPER, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. BARLETTA, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

H.R. 284. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require State licensure and bid surety bonds for entities submitting bids under the Medicare durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics, and supplies (DMEPOS) competitive acquisition program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. WAGNER (for herself, Mrs. BLACK, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. JOLLY, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. BARR, Mr. LANCE, Mr. GOSAR, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. COOK, Mr. PEARCE, Ms. BASS, Mrs. BEATTY, Mrs. BUSTOS, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. ESTY, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. MENG, Mr. SCHOCK, Mr. PAULSEN, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. CLAY, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. GIBSON, and Mr. KLINE):

H.R. 285. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide a penalty for knowingly selling advertising that offers certain commercial sex acts; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ZINKE:

H.R. 286. A bill to extend the Federal recognition to the Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians of Montana, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. BRIDENSTINE:

H.J. Res. 15. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States granting Congress the authority to enact laws limiting the number of terms that Representatives and Senators may serve; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. KING of Iowa (for himself and Mr. WOODALL):

H.J. Res. 16. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to repeal the sixteenth article of amendment; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BUCHANAN (for himself and Mr. LONG):

H.J. Res. 17. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relative to balancing the budget; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MCCLINTOCK:

H.J. Res. 18. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States prohibiting the United States Government from increasing its debt except for a specific purpose by law adopted by three-fourths of the membership of each House of Congress; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PALAZZO:

H.J. Res. 19. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the

United States to limit the number of consecutive terms that a Member of Congress may serve; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PALAZZO (for himself, Mr. HARPER, and Mr. LAMALFA):

H.J. Res. 20. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to limit Congress' power to impose a tax on a failure to purchase goods or services; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. COMSTOCK:

H. Con. Res. 7. Concurrent resolution providing for a joint session of Congress to receive a message from the President; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. GOODLATTE (for himself and Mr. CAPUANO):

H. Res. 26. A resolution strongly supporting the quality and value of diversity and innovation in the Nation's higher education institutions, and strongly disagreeing with the President's proposal to create and administer a Postsecondary Institution Ratings System; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. DAVIS of California (for herself, Mr. JOYCE, and Mr. KING of New York):

H. Res. 28. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Postal Service should take all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of door delivery for all business and residential customers; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mrs. ELLMERS:

H.R. 270.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Commerce Clause: Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution gives Congress the power "to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes."

By Mr. BILIRAKIS:

H.R. 271.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution of the United States and Article I, Section 8, Clause 7 of the Constitution of the United States.

Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution, which grants Congress the power to raise and support an Army; to provide and maintain a Navy; to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces; and provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia.

By Mr. WALBERG:

H.R. 272.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clauses 12, 14 and 18 of the Constitution of the United States; the authority to raise and support an army, to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces and to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper carrying into execution the foregoing powers.

By Mr. RUSH:

H.R. 273.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

"The Congress shall have power "To regulate commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes"

By Mr. RUSH:

H.R. 274.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

"The Congress shall have Power "to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes."

By Mr. RUSH:

H.R. 275.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution granted Congress the power to lay and collect taxes to provide for the general welfare of the United States. Further, Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 provides that Congress shall have power "To regulate commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes"

By Mrs. BLACK:

H.R. 276.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution (relating to the power of Congress with respect to taxes and spending).

By Mr. HASTINGS:

H.R. 277.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Const. art. I, § 8

By Mr. LARSEN of Washington:

H.R. 278.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

As described in Article 1, Section 1 "all legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress."

By Mr. LATTA:

H.R. 279.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3: Congress shall have the Power . . . "to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian tribes."

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 280.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. PALAZZO:

H.R. 281.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: The Congress shall have Power . . . To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. RIBBLE:

H.R. 282.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 9, clause 7 of the United States Constitution which provides that, "No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law, and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time.

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 283.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

AMENDMENT IV: The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath of affirmation and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

By Mr. TIBERI:

H.R. 284.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mrs. WAGNER:

H.R. 285.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress in Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution: "To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes."

Additional authority derives from Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution: "To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof."

By Mr. ZINKE:

H.R. 286.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following: Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States that states "The Congress shall have Power to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes."

By Mr. BRIDENSTINE:

H.J. Res. 15.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article V of the Constitution, which grants Congress the authority to propose Constitutional amendments.

By Mr. KING of Iowa:

H.J. Res. 16.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This joint resolution is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress to propose amendments to the Constitution under Article V of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BUCHANAN:

H.J. Res. 17.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this joint resolution rests is the power of Congress as enumerated in Article V of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MCCLINTOCK:

H.J. Res. 18.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article V of the United States Constitution provides for amendments to the United States Constitution.

By Mr. PALAZZO:

H.J. Res. 19.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article V: The Congress, whenever two thirds of both houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose amendments to this Constitution, or, on the application of the legislatures of two thirds of the several states, shall call a convention for proposing amendments, which, in either case, shall be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of this Constitution, when ratified by the legislatures of three fourths of the several states,

or by conventions in three fourths thereof, as the one or the other mode of ratification may be proposed by the Congress; provided that no amendment which may be made prior to the year one thousand eight hundred and eight shall in any manner affect the first and fourth clauses in the ninth section of the first article; and that no state, without its consent, shall be deprived of its equal suffrage in the Senate.

By Mr. PALAZZO:

H.J. Res. 20.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article V: The Congress, whenever two thirds of both houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose amendments to this Constitution, or, on the application of the legislatures of two thirds of the several states, shall call a convention for proposing amendments, which, in either case, shall be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of this Constitution, when ratified by the legislatures of three fourths of the several states, or by conventions in three fourths thereof, as the one or the other mode of ratification may be proposed by the Congress; provided that no amendment which may be made prior to the year one thousand eight hundred and eight shall in any manner affect the first and fourth clauses in the ninth section of the first article; and that no state, without its consent, shall be deprived of its equal suffrage in the Senate.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 25: Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, and Mr. SANFORD.

H.R. 27: Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. HURT of Virginia, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. POSEY, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, and Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 32: Mr. JONES.

H.R. 33: Mr. HANNA, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. MARINO, Mr. PERRY, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. DENT, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. ROTHFUS, and Mr. HURT of Virginia.

H.R. 36: Mr. AMASH, Mr. BRAT, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. REED, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. HARPER, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. CRAMER, and Mrs. BLACK.

H.R. 44: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

H.R. 94: Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 109: Mr. POSEY and Mr. CULBERSON.

H.R. 114: Mr. COOK.

H.R. 132: Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. PERRY, and Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 143: Mr. NUGENT, Mr. JONES, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. MOOLENAAR, and Mr. MULVANEY.

H.R. 154: Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. HIGGINS, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 156: Mr. SCHWEIKERT and Mr. WESTERMAN.

H.R. 161: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. STEWART, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. LAMALFA, and Mr. MARINO.

H.R. 167: Mr. VALADAO, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. BEN RAY LUJAN of New Mexico, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Ms. TITUS, and Mr. TIBERI.

H.R. 173: Mr. JORDAN and Mr. WESTERMAN.

H.R. 177: Mr. REICHERT.

H.R. 178: Mr. CRAWFORD.

H.R. 181: Mr. PAULSEN.

H.R. 185: Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. HOLDING, Mr. FORBES, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. KLINE, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. EMMER, and Mr. RICE of South Carolina.

H.R. 187: Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. WELCH, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. VALADAO, Mrs. BUSTOS, and Mr. MULVANEY.

H.R. 191: Mr. PALMER, Mr. OLSON, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. WEBER of Texas, and Mr. HUNTER.

H.R. 203: Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. SINEMA, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. CICILLINE, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, and Mr. GIBSON.

H.R. 204: Mr. CURBELO of Florida.

H.R. 206: Mr. ALLEN and Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.

H.R. 217: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. MARINO, and Mr. AMASH.

H.R. 223: Mr. RIBBLE.

H.R. 227: Mr. FLEMING.

H.R. 228: Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. COOK, and Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 238: Ms. JUDY CHU of California and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 246: Ms. BASS, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, and Mr. KLINE.

H.J. Res. 1: Mr. EMMER, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. CLAWSON of Florida, Mr. KLINE, and Mr. POSEY.

H.J. Res. 2: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. CLAWSON of Florida, Mr. KLINE, and Mr. EMMER.

H.J. Res. 13: Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. HANNA, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, and Mr. DESJARLAIS.

H. Res. 11: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. PERRY, Mr. FLEMING, and Mr. RIGELL.

H. Res. 12: Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. JOYCE, and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.

H. Res. 24: Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BARR, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. MASSIE, Mrs. WALORSKI, and Mr. KNIGHT.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY Mr. CONAWAY

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Agricultural in H.R. 37 do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

OFFERED BY Mr. PRICE

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on the Budget in H.R. 240, the Department of Homeland Security Appro-

priations Act, 2015, do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

DELETION OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 217: Mr. SMITH of Washington.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII, petitions and papers were laid on the clerk's desk and referred as follows:

1. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the City of Lauderhill, Florida, relative to Resolution No. 14R-10-247, urging the Department of Labor to more effectively enforce the Equal Pay Act of 1963, the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009 and other continued efforts for ensuring parity in pay for women so that women in comparable positions make incomes much more closely related to their male counterparts; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

2. Also, a petition of the City of Lauderhill, Florida, relative to Resolution No. 14R-12-278, supporting the Haitian Family Reunification Parole Program that was created by the Department of Homeland Security; to the Committee on the Judiciary.